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N.L.XX

THE COUNTESS GUICCIOLI,

LORD BYRONS PICCININA.

FROM A DRAWING MADE BY A CELEBRATED ITALIAN ARTIST,
ENGRAVED BY MEYER, FOR "THE LIFE, WRITINGS, OPINIONS,
AND TIMES, OF THE R.T HON.BLE LORD BYRON, IN 3 VOLS. 8VO."

Published N.o1. Somerset Street, Portman Square.

THE

LIFE,
WRITINGS, OPINIONS,

AND

TIMES

OF THE

RIGHT HON. GEORGE GORDON NOEL BYRON,

LORD BYRON;

INCLUDING, IN ITS MOST EXTENSIVE BIOGRAPHY, ANECDOTES, AND MEMOIRS OF THE LIVES OF THE MOST EMINENT AND ECCENTRIC, PUBLIC AND NOBLE CHARACTERS AND COURTIERS OF THE PRESENT POLISHED AND ENLIGHTENED

AGE AND COURT OF

HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE THE FOURTH.

In the course of the Biography is also separately given,

COPIOUS RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LATELY DESTROYED MS.

ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR POSTHUMOUS PUBLICATION,

AND ENTITLED

MEMOIRS OF MY OWN LIFE AND TIMES,

BY THE RIGHT HON. LORD BYRON.

"CREDE BYRON."—*Motto of the Byron Family.*

23364

" I have, in this rough work, shaped out a man
' Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug
" With amplest entertainment: my free drift
" Halts not particularly, but moves itself
" In a wide sea of wax; no levelled malice
" Infects one comma in the course I hold,
" But flies an eagle flight, bold and forth on,
" Leaving no tract behind." SHAKSPEARE.—*Timon of Athens.*

BY AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN, IN THE GREEK MILITARY SERVICE, AND COMRADE OF HIS LORDSHIP.

Compiled from authentic Documents and from long personal Acquaintance.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE

LIFE

OF

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON.

CHAPTER I.

Lord Byron engages in a literary Controversy with the Rev. Mr. Bowles respecting the poetic character of Pope.—Sheridan's Anecdote of Mr. Whitbread.—Lord Byron's Historical Tragedy of "Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice."—"The Prophecy of Dante," a poem.—Visit to Ravenna.—An occurrence in that city hastens Lord Byron's departure from thence.—He embarks for Cyprus.

A NEW scene was now about to open upon Lord Byron, or rather he was about to cut out a new line of business for himself, by entering, as a volunteer, into a literary controversy; not in defence of his own writings, as was the case when he published his "*Scotch Reviewers and English Bards,*" but as the champion of the character and fame of one of the first bards of the English nation. Joseph Warton was the first man who ventured to declare of Pope, that he did not think him at the *head of his profession*, and that *his species of poetry* was not the *most excellent one* of the art. Many years after, Johnson, interrogating this critic, inquired, "If

Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumscribe poetry," he added, "by a definition, will only shew the narrowness of the definer." Yet such a definer arose in the disciple of Warton, the Rev. W. L. Bowles, who recommenced the attack by his "*Observations on the poetic Character of Pope.*" The origin of this controversy sprung from Mr. Bowles's being employed by the Company of Booksellers to superintend a new edition of Pope's Works, which he prefaced by the aforesaid Observations. Mr. Campbell took up his pen in defence of Pope, and Mr. Bowles rejoined in a pamphlet, *modestly* intitled—"*The invariable Principles of Poetry.*" Lord Byron soon after published his satire on "*Scotch Reviewers and English Bards,*" in which he lashed Mr. Bowles with great severity for his *bell-ringing* propensity, without drawing any reply from Mr. Bowles, who, as he himself tells the story, tried to persuade his Lordship to suppress the work. The anecdote, which is a literary curiosity, is this: "Soon after Lord Byron published his vigorous satire, called '*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,*' in which, alas! *pars magna fui*, I met his Lordship at our common friend's house, the author of the '*Pleasures of Memory,*' and the still more beautiful poem, '*Human Life.*' As the rest of the company were going into another room, I said I wished to speak one word to his Lordship. He came back with much apparent courtesy. I then

said to him, in a tone of *seriousness*, but that of perfectly *good humour*, 'My Lord, I should not have thought of making any observations on whatever you might be pleased to give to the world, as your opinion on any part of my writings; but I think if *I can shew* that you have done me a palpable and public wrong, by charging me with having written what I never wrote or thought of, your own *principles of justice* will not *allow the impression to remain*. I then spoke of a particular couplet, which he had introduced into his satire,

> "Thy woods, Madeira, trembled with a kiss;"

and taking down the poem, which was at hand, I pointed out the passage." Excellently contrived, indeed! but Mr. Bowles failed in his diplomatic attempt, and still remains—

> "Delightful Bowles! still blessing and still blest,
> All love thy strains, but children love them best."

Mr. Bowles's edition of Pope was now attacked in turn by the critics, who accused him of partiality and incompetency, and of detraction from Pope's fame, as well as defamation of his character. The outcry soon became general. Mr. Bowles, in his "*Observations on the poetic Character of Pope*," lays down two principles as axioms—that "images drawn from what is beautiful and sublime in *nature*, are *more poetical* than images drawn from *art*;" and that "the *passions* are more

adapted to poetry than the *manners*." Mr. Campbell, and other opponents, maintain, that "the exquisite description of *artificial objects and manners* is no less *characteristic of genius* than the description of *simple physical appearances*." In Mr. Bowles, this appears to be an attempt to erect an arbitrary standard of theories, criteria, and invariable principles, which shall fix the framer (*i. e.* Mr. Bowles himself) on the pinnacle of excellence, the tip-top of Parnassus! That a literary party, out of the professed pale of eminent authors, should be found to support such pretensions, is rather arrogant, when we reflect that descriptive poetry, however much the merits of its execution may differ, according to the talents of the writer, is so far from deserving such extravagant encomiums, that it is precisely that species which every versifier can attempt, even those who would not venture upon any other theme. Any of the rhyming tribe might aim to follow Lord Byron's path in describing the sea, or a moonlight evening; but they would not dream of depicting the mental struggles and conflicting feelings of the imprisoned *Corsair*. This very consideration, however, accounts for the number of poets who have espoused these doctrines; for how many delineators of birds, beasts, fishes, and designers of "*sylvan samplers*," would find their account in establishing a theory that opens so easy a path to the reputation of first-rate excellence, rather than

digesting the unpalatable precept of Shakespeare, that the climax of the poet's art and merit, consists in giving "to airy nothing a local habitation and a name." Mr. Bowles should have known, before he set up for a critic, that every man has his peculiar fancies, and that it is only by following the bent of his genius that he can hope to arrive at excellence. Milton, Dante, and Voltaire, had their partialities, and so had Pope; and his "*Rape of the Lock*" is not inferior, in its way, to the "*Paradise Lost*," "*The Inferno*," or "*The Henriade*." Pope preferred delineations of domestic life—men and manners—to rural scenery; but his *art* required full as much of the creative or inventive faculty, the *vis poetica*, as Mr. Bowles's *nature*; and as poesy itself is but an art, its most powerful effects are produced by a combination of images in which Nature acts but a secondary part. Mr. Campbell, in his defence of Pope, prefixed to the "*Specimens of English Poetry*," sought to illustrate this position by the image of a ship about to be launched, as an instance of the superior beauty of art over nature. To this Mr. Bowles replied, that this object would have nothing at all poetical in it, without the more active and commanding powers of the wind and waves. Lord Byron now joined the controversy, and, in a letter to Mr. Murray, his publisher in London, dated from Ravenna, he made a spirited attack on Mr. Bowles, as a detractor and calumniator of Pope, and in

support of the opinion that for poetical effect Art is superior to Nature. Among other instances, in support of his theory, Lord Byron gives the following most beautiful one:

"I look upon myself (says Lord Byron) as entitled to talk of naval matters, at least to poets; with the exception of Walter Scott, Moore, and Southey, perhaps, who have been voyagers, I have swam more miles than all the rest of them together, now living, ever sailed, and have lived for months and months on shipboard; and during the whole period of my life abroad, have scarcely ever passed a month out of sight of the ocean, besides being brought up from two years till ten on the brink of it. I recollect, when anchored off Cape Sigeum, in 1810, in an English frigate, a violent squall coming on at sun-set, so violent as to make us imagine that the ship would part cable, or drive from her anchorage. Mr. Hobhouse and myself, and some officers, had been up the Dardanelles to Abydos, and were just returned in time. The aspect of a storm in the Archipelago is as poetical as need be, the sea being particularly short, dashing, and dangerous, and the navigation intricate, and broken by the isles and currents. Cape Sigeum, the tumuli of the Troad, Lemnos, Tenedos, all added to the associations of the time. But what seemed the most *poetical* of all at the moment were the numbers (about two hundred) of Greek and Turkish craft, which were obliged to 'cut

and run' before the wind from their unsafe anchorage, some for Tenedos, some for other isles, some for the main, and some, it might be, for eternity. The sight of these little scudding vessels, darting over the foam in the twilight, now appearing and now disappearing between the waves in the cloud of night, with their peculiarly white sails (the Levant sails not being of coarse canvas but of white cotton), skimming along as quickly, but less safely, than the sea-mews which hovered over them; their evident distress, their reduction to fluttering specks in the distance, their crowded succession, their littleness, as contending with the giant element, which made our stout forty-four's teak timber creak again; their aspect and their motion all struck me as something far more '*poetical*' than the mere broad, brawling shipless sea, and the sullen winds could possibly have been without them."

His Lordship is certainly right, the aspect of a *shipless* sea is as barren as the deserts of Arabia, and without some accidental images of ships* on

* The compiler of this work has passed great part of his time on the sea, and can bear witness that there can scarcely be a more dreary scene than the wide expanse of ocean, without a single object intervening between the eye and the horizon. A ship heaving in sight, a shark, or a shoal of dolphins or porpoises, afford inconceivable pleasure. Many a night has he seated himself on deck, smoking his pipe, his ideas painfully directed to those friends he was leaving, or if he sought to divert his melancholy, his thoughts were roused to the author of the creation. It may be said that this was sufficient employment. May be so;—

on the one, or a caravan or horde of Arabs on the other, could never be deemed a poetical subject. The fact is that no image, either of nature or art, can properly be termed *poetical* of itself, without reference to the ideas with which it is associated. The humblest and most unsightly objects may be made, in certain situations, subservient to poetical beauty. Lord Byron has adduced, very effectually, the example of Cowper's needle, in his "*Address to Mary.*" A button is an object apparently as uninviting to the poet as a needle; yet who can resist the pathos of Lear's—"Please you undo this button, Sir," when the poor old monarch feels his heart bursting? Thus the meanest things may, by a judicious application, be rendered poetical images from the ideas associated with them, barren as the subjects themselves may appear to a superficial observer. A due attention to this consideration might have spared Mr. Bowles much trouble; for in every experiment he has made of substituting an artificial for a natural image, in order to prove the superiority of the latter, it will be found on examination that the enfeebled or burlesque effect produced does not proceed from the substituted term being unsus-

so;—but if all our poets directed their attentions to that one point, paramount as it is to every other consideration, we should soon grow weary of their lucubrations. Passing images and shifting scenes are requisite to beget new ideas and give a spur to the invention.

ceptible of poetical effect, but from its having been introduced in an unappropriate situation.

Lord Byron's defence of the long-established and well-founded fame of the first poet of his own or any other age, is certainly deserving of encomium from all, but the nest of hornets whom he has thus stirred up, and, it is to be hoped, for ever put to flight. It was a daring attempt of the *Lilliputians* to chain the great *Gulliver*, whom, had he been alive, they would never have dared to attack for fear of being gibbeted in a new edition of the *Dunciad*. Time, which will sink so many other poets into oblivion, will only confer immortality on Pope. Much as every one must admire Mr. Bowles's abilities, they must deprecate his attacking the fame and character of a poet dead a century ago, who, had he been alive, would have scattered such puny antagonists as the dust of the desert before the raging whirlwind. To raise one's self to the highest pitch possible is not only fair but laudable; to try to pull down others is base, ungenerous, and contemptible. Lord Byron's letter is remarkable for one thing more; an anecdote related by Sheridan of Whitbread. " Soon after the Rejected Address Scene, in 1812, I met Sheridan. In the course of dinner he said: ' Lord Byron, did you know that amongst the writers of Addresses was Whitbread himself?'—I answered by an inquiry what sort of an Address he had made? ' Of that,' replied

Sheridan, 'I remember little, except that there was a phœnix in it.'—'A *phœnix!* well, how did he describe it?'—'Like a poulterer,' answered Sheridan; 'it was green and yellow, and red and blue; he did not let us off for a single feather.'"

Mr. Bowles, as if determined to keep the field, published an *Answer* to Lord Byron's Letter to Mr. Murray on Bowles's *Strictures* on Pope's Life and Writings; but Lord Byron, satisfied with the chastisement he had inflicted, had already turned his attention to more noble pursuits. Venice—that Venice so well-known to Britons by two of the noblest tragedies, of Shakespeare and Otway, he could not take leave of without shewing that he had not found it a barren residence. "Every thing about Venice," says the noble Lord, "is, or was, extraordinary,—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance." Venice is certainly, as his Lordship has before described her, only a shadow of her former self—a dream; it is equally certain that her history abounds in plots, conspiracies, insurrections, and romantic adventures, sufficient to furnish dramatic incidents to many a histrionic performance. His Lordship founded on it the historical tragedy of "*Marino Faliero,*" the Doge of Venice. From the preface, as containing some curious information, and his Lordship's sentiments of many writers and performers of the age, the following copious extract may not be unacceptable. "It is

now four years that I have meditated this work, and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was disposed to have made it turn on the jealousy of Faliero; but perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was besides well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. 'If you make him jealous,' said he, 'recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakespeare and an exhausted subject; stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn; and make your plot as regular as you can.' Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, it is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time; and I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, the loud critic, and the last review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is

a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will. While I was in the sub-committee of Drury-lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the *legitimate drama*.* I tried what I could to get "*De Montfort*" revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's "*Ivan*," which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr. Coleridge to write a tragedy. Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe, that the "*School for Scandal*" is the play which has brought *least* money, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since Maturin's "*Bertram*," I am not aware; so that I may be traducing,

* Highly to the credit of Lord Byron's taste and judgment, it should be mentioned that he set his face against the rage for precocious talent, and juvenile acting, on which he bestowed the appropriate epithet of the *Roscio-mania*. Nothing but the desperate situation of the affairs of Drury-lane Theatre could have justified the *Folly of the Day*, in which, however, Lord Byron took no part.

through ignorance, some excellent new writers; if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the Parisian Gazette of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me then deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arises, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean, in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Neill I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw any thing at all resembling them even in *person:* for this reason, we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace and not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all *not* supernatural parts he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble, we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinal de Retz said of the Marquis de Montrose, that, 'he was

the only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of Plutarch.' "

Lord Byron having taken a short flight in Manfred, as if to essay his strength of pinion, now determines to take a loftier soar. The story is a new edition of Venice Preserved, and continually brings it to mind, perhaps, to its no little disadvantage, as coming in competition with an old established favourite.

The story is simply this: Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice, and nearly eighty years of age, marries a young beauty of the name of Angiolina, and soon after their union, a giddy young nobleman, whom he had publicly disgraced, affixes some indecent lines on his chair of state, purporting that he was the husband of a fair wife, whom he had the honour of keeping for the benefit of others. The Doge, having discovered the author of this vile lampoon, complains of him to the Senate, who, upon proof of the charge, sentence him to a month's confinement. The Doge, looking upon this as quite inadequate to the reparation of his offended honour, conceives an implacable animosity against the whole of the nobility, and, in spite of the dignified example and gentle soothing of Angiolina, heads a conspiracy which had been organized for the overthrow of the government by certain malcontents, who had more substantive injuries to redress. One of the faction, however, has a friend in the Senate whom he

wishes to preserve; and goes to him on the eve of the insurrection to forewarn him, which leads to the detection. The Doge and his associates are apprehended and brought to trial; and the former, after a vain intercession of Angiolina, who candidly admits the enormity of his guilt, and prays only for his life, is led in his state robes to the place where he first receives his dignities, and there publicly decapitated by the hands of the executioner.

Next to the oversight, or want of judgment, in selecting a plot which had kept possession of the British stage for so many years, was that of following the French school in that point which will prevent it from ever attaining a pitch of excellence—a too rigid adherence to the *unities*. Meagre as was his plot, Lord Byron unfortunately abridged the compass which he might have taken, by showing how the passions of the Doge had been gradually inflamed against the senate, for it would be preposterous to suppose that the lampoon of a licentious youth could have raised such a storm in the breast of a man of eighty, and a ruler of the state. The French may style their drama 'regular,' and 'classical,' but who would not rather see one of the irregular historical plays of Shakespeare, than any one within the whole range of the French drama? What has the stage of the present day in common with the ancient one? The open amphitheatre, day-light exhibitions, the cho-

rus, mask and buskin, have all given way to a close room, candle-light, unmasked and slippered actors; we have made a nearer approach to nature; we have a different world, a different race of beings, different manners, to represent; and, as the opposite ends of the earth are now no strangers to each other, a greater latitude for the display of genius to render such performances pleasing. Greek dramas no doubt delighted the ancient Greeks; but would any modern audience sit out the representation of a correct translation of any one of them? Dr. Johnson has already pretty well settled accounts with the *unities*. They should be kept when they can be so without marring any essential beauty; where they cannot be, they may be dispensed with. Still further in imitation of the French, Lord Byron seems to be too fond of making ranters and declaimers of his principal characters.* There are instances in the French drama of a single uninterrupted speech by one actor of one hundred and fifty lines and upwards, which would send ninety-nine persons out of one hundred of an English audience out of the theatre, and the rest either

* In act iv. of "*Marino Faliero*," Lioni's soliloquy is extended to ninety-two lines. The Doge has another speech in the same act of seventy lines. In act v. Angiolina declaims in a speech of sixty-one lines, and the Doge, the instant before his decapitation, labours through a speech of eighty lines. The audience must blame the executioner for not putting an end to the tedious prolixity of the old man, by doing his duty. The poetry is beautiful, but the arrangement is bad.

yawning, or fast asleep. It is not the mere cold art of declamation that will enrapture an English audience (be the manner ever so chaste and correct, and the subject ever so pathetic and beautiful); but the development of the passions, strong delineations of character, and those ebullitions of human nature which, impel, impede, interfere with, and counteract each other in a perpetual struggle, and embroil all the affairs of life. A drama should be a representation of nature; and the nearer both the play and the players approach to nature, the more certain will be the success. In the French drama there is too much of art, art too clearly visible; in the English, perhaps, too little; but, as they approach nearer to nature, they are every day gaining ground upon their rivals, even in their own domains. Aristotle, Horace, and Bossu are great names, but their meaning has been often misunderstood or misrepresented; and were they not, they are fallible, and the times are strangely altered since their days. To this adherence to the regulations of the French in preference to the English school, must Lord Byron's miscarriage be principally attributed. Notwithstanding the disadvantages under which he laboured, the sublimity of his ideas, the grandeur of his expressions, and the energetic beauties of his descriptions, would have carried him through in triumph, if he had taken the pains to make it palateable to a British audience,

instead of endeavouring to run counter to all their established ideas. Lord Byron needed not have told us in the preface that he did not write for the stage; it was evident that he had not taken the steps to ensure success, by aiming to please the audience; but he undoubtedly had it in his power to have pleased them, if he himself had pleased to make it his aim. Nothing can be more touching, sweet, and dignified than the manner in which the Doge seeks to justify himself for marrying Angiolina, with such disparity of age:—

"'Twas not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,
Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my firiest youth
I sway'd such passions; nor was this my age
Infected with that leprosy of lust
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanish'd joys;
Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
Too helpless to refuse a state that's honest,
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had
Freedom from me to choose, and urg'd in answer
Your father's voice.
I knew my heart would never treat you harshly;
I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years;

Inheriting a prince's name and riches,
Secured, by the short penance of enduring
An old man for some summers, against all
That laws chicane or envious kinsmen might
Have urged against her right; my best friend's child
Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
And not less truly in a faithful heart."

The scene of the conspirators too much resembles similar passages in Venice Preserved to be repeated; but the fourth act opens with the most delightful part of the whole piece. Lioni, a young nobleman, returns home from a brilliant assembly quite jaded, and opening the window for air, contrasts the tranquillity of the night-scene before him with the glaring and bustling enchantments which he had just left. Nothing can be more fine than the force and luxuriance of description of the assembly, to which that of the placid moonlight view, equally poetic and grand, forms as striking an opposition as can be well conceived. It is long, but its beauty will excuse its introduction:

"I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits; 'tis
A goodly night; the cloudy wind, which blew
From the Levant, hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What a stillness!
[*Goes to an open lattice.*
And what a contrast to the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls.
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,

Which show'd all things, but nothing as they were.
There age essaying to recall the past,
After long striving for the hues of youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,
Believed itself forgotten, and was fool'd.
There youth, which needed not, nor thought of such
Vain adjuncts, lavish'd its true bloom and health,
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flush'd and crowded wassailers, and wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure,
And so shall waste them, till the sun-rise streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
The music, and the banquet, and the wine,
The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers,
The sparkling eyes, and flashing ornaments—
The white arms, and the raven hair,—the braids
And bracelets; swan-like bosoms, and the necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven;
The many twinkling feet so small and sylph-like,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry
Of the fair forms that terminate so well—
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments—art and nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
The sight of beauty as the parch'd pilgrim's
On Arab's sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone.—Around me are the stars and waters—
Worlds mirror'd in the ocean, goodlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great element, which is to space

What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
Soften'd with the first breathing of the spring;
The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of these tall piles, and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, shewing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight;—the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow chequering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace-roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born, and earth-commanding city—
How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm!
I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chas'd away
These horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,

I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence,—
Now will I to my couch, although to rest
Is almost wronging such a night as this."

Now who, after so sublime a specimen, must not regret—lament—that the giant's strength was wasted on air; who will not feel assured, that with such a flow of ideas, and such a command of diction, if the poet had made a proper choice of a plot, and had paid attention to the arrangement, one half of the abilities that he has here thrown away might have produced a drama that would have delighted the audience, and have kept possession of the stage? As a dramatic poem, no one of taste can now peruse it without experiencing admiration, and feeling pleasure. As a play, in representation it is defective of the moving passions, of probability, and of depth and variety of interest; and the injury bears an extravagant disproportion to the vengeance with which it is attempted to be followed up. In some parts, owing to the scantiness of the plot, the diction is cumbrous and heavy, and in the best passages it is, as already hinted, much too verbose for an English audience. Otway's play will always bear it down, because the probability is greater, there is a much stronger cause for the insurrection, the tenderness and magnanimity of Belvidera, and the friendship of Jaffier and Pierre are admirable auxiliaries; and, finally, because the language is more simple, the

arrangement more dramatic, and the *tout ensemble* much more natural. It is for these reasons that no piece has ever possessed a stronger hold on the affections of Britons, and no attempt could have been more daring or injudicious than that of entering into competition with an established favourite.

On these grounds, and probably, too, because every thing that was great and excellent was expected from Lord Byron, the piece was pronounced to be a failure by the public voice, although how he could fail in an attempt which he never intended to make seems rather paradoxical. Notwithstanding his Lordship's avowed repugnance to its representation, Mr Elliston, the lessee of Drury-lane theatre, evidently relying on his Lordship's fame and popularity, determined to bring it out; and his Lordship's publisher, on the other hand, applied for and obtained an injunction of the Court of Chancery to restrain him from the exhibition. The lessee, however, managed so as have the injunction dissolved, and the representation took place. Under these circumstances, it may be doubted whether "*Marino Faliero*," not being intended for theatrical exhibition, can be deemed a fair object of *dramatic* criticism.

We had the curiosity to go to see the performance of "*Marino Faliero.*" The want of stage effect was never more visible; we came away, however, nothing doubting that had his Lordship moulded it for the stage, he would have ensured

its success, and the approbation of applauding audiences; but his Lordship wrote not for the stage, he knew too well what it was, to conceive it an object of exalted ambition. If fault is found with his arrangement, and with the plot, the want of *proper* stage effect deserves still greater censure; common justice was not done this play; there was no talent to support the characters; the performers were not equal to their parts, and the want of appropriate scenery was deplorable; add to this, so much fuss about the *injunction* caused it to be seen under the impression that it was not written for the stage, even after it was altered for it and brought there, whereas, in order to have given the play a fair chance, that prejudice should, after such alteration, instantly and altogether have died away. Indeed, when all things are considered, it will appear that it was brought out under most unhappy auspices, and the worst of all possible circumstances, so that the public had not a fair opportunity of judging of its merits as a dramatic representation. There can be little doubt, when it is known that *such* was the case, that in the progress of time "*Faliero*," phœnix-like, will rise from its own ashes, and together with the other dramatic productions of the noble bard be adapted for, and occupy a prominent place upon the stage, and a large share of public interest. It is thought necessary to alter even Shakespeare for the stage of the present day, how then is it possible that the

productions of a genius which, if not equal, is at least second *only* to Shakespeare, should remain for ever *unperformed*, or unadapted for the stage? Some time afterwards we saw "*Venice Preserved*;" here again the want of *proper* stage effect accompanied every act, and was intolerable; one instance will suffice—imagine Pierre, in chains, brought by the guards into the throne-room of the ducal palace, in the presence of the senators, the judges, and before Jaffier, his unwillingly treacherous friend; he is arraigned; he is condemned to die upon the wheel (so far so good); but the senators and judges, after staring in vacant earnestness for some time at the two prisoners, suddenly rise, as if electrified, and apparently very well satisfied with themselves, with the gravity of wiseacres, march out of the room; the guards, of course, follow the example of their learned masters, and Pierre and Jaffier (who all along have been conversing, a liberty never allowed to any state prisoners, either before or since) are, to our great astonishment, left *alone*, in the *full possession* of the royal chamber, of the regalia, and of every thing belonging to that state against which they had conspired. This is exactly what they wanted, what a pity it is they did not seize this propitious moment; how inexpressibly obliged would they have been for having their desires gratified by the very means which sought to frustrate them; much indeed it is to be regretted that they omitted to

take advantage of this signal opportunity, while it was in their power either to trample upon or take possession of the very *throne* itself which was before them; this owing to the *manager's* kindness they *could* have done, *ad libitum*, even after Pierre's condemnation, to say nothing of the charming opportunity he thus obligingly left open for them to escape. However, Pierre, like an honest man, walks quietly off to the place of execution; Jaffier is left awhile lamenting his loss; in comes Belvidera; here they both whine *in state*. The same royal scenery answers their purpose; it is an excellent way to obviate the trouble of scene-shifting; so much for stage effect. There was no connection, no attention to arrangement, all was unnatural, the very acme of absurdity; yet such was actually the case with one of our first and metropolitan theatres, and when the public know that in conjunction with other derogatory circumstances, "*Marino Faliero*" laboured under similar disadvantages and was in like manner mutilated, it will not be wondered at that the play should fall short of success. The Doge was completely mangled; such unskilful treatment, indeed, was enough to cause the death of any Doge that Venice has ever produced. Can we then wonder at the fate of *Faliero?* It would be infinitely preferable to follow the plan of the ancients, and to perform without any scenery whatever, than thus so egregiously to offend our senses by such

evident inattention to it. It may, indeed, be a matter of dispute whether Lord Byron's tragedies require modelling to our stage, or our stage to Lord Byron's tragedies; certain it is, that our theatre itself requires *re-modelling*; here the utility of it may be perverted we see every day, while the noble purposes to which it might be applied are scarcely ever thought of; self-interest is now the ruling power which pervades, and the only principle which guides it; it is not what it ought to be, the emporium of cultivated and national taste, the forum of improvement; but it is entirely dedicated to individual aggrandizement. Would it not be possible by removing these obstacles to its advancement, to raise its fallen condition? Doubtless if Government were to build a grand national theatre, or to take the two old ones under its protection, and appoint a committee of literatito regulate their movements, by a judicious selection of pieces and performers, the theatre would be raised to a pitch of national glory, and we should not now have to lament the dormant condition of the legitimate drama. It might be made a source of some profit to the legislature; it would certainly be profitable to public morality and amusement.

In the same volume with "*Marino Faliero*" is a poem, in four cantos, intitled "*The Prophecy of Dante*," of the origin of which his Lordship gives the following account in the preface: "In the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna, in the

summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author, that having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile, the tomb* of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and the stranger.

* At one corner of the Franciscan Convent, in the public street, is the monument, with a busto of the celebrated Florentine poet, Dante Alighieri. Over it is a cover to defend it from the rains, and before it iron rails. The work was performed by Pietro Lombardi. Misson and others ascribe the repairing of this monument to the celebrated Pietro Bembo, but the inscription and date sufficiently show that this honour is due to his father, Bernardo Bembo, a nobleman of Venice, with which also agrees the testimony of Pocciantius de Script. Florent. p. 45, though this author is mistaken in placing it in the year 1433, whereas it should be 1483. Dante was born in 1265, and died in 1321. The animosities between the factions of *Bianchi* and *Neri* obliged him to quit Florence, his native country; for the former party, with which Dante sided, was defeated and driven out of the city. His proper name was *Durante*, which, in his infancy, was contracted into *Dante*, the name by which he was ever afterwards known. *Vincent Buonanni* says, that *Alighieri* was only his father's name, but that his true family name was *Bello*. As the poetical genius of *Petrarch* was enlivened by his passion for *Laura*, so that of *Dante* appeared very early in passionate addresses to his beloved objects. *Beatrix Portinaria*, and *Gentucca*, are the two charmers whose names he has rendered immortal; and, in a particular poem, *Dante* introduces divinity under the name of his beloved *Beatrix*, then lately deceased. His book, *De Monarchia*, in which he defends the power of the Emperor, in temporal affairs, against the usurpation of the Pope, so influenced the Roman Pontiff, that he was declared a heretic.

Keysler's Travels.

" 'On *this hint I spake*,' and the result has been the following four cantos, in *terza rima*, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the '*Divine Commedia*' and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan, I have had in my mind the '*Cassandra*' of Lycophron, and the '*Prophecy of Nereus*,' by Horace, as well as the prophecies of the Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the *terza rima* of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to '*Caliph Vathek*;' so that, if I do not err, this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

" Amongst other inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any one who has a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of '*Childe Harold*' translated into Italian *versi sciolti*, that is, a poem written in the *Spenserian stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of

the stanza, or of the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember, that when I have failed in the imitation of his great '*Padre Alighieri*,' I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the '*Inferno*,' unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

" He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation—their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill-disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding fault with his *ultra-montane* presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one, and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both."—*Ravenna, June* 21, 1819.

This piece seems to have been written from

the very impulse of the author's soul, and consequently it is grand, fervid, energetic, and replete with the most beautiful thoughts, expressed in the most pure diction, as if he would vie with the poet, to whose merits he pays a just tribute, and over whose unmerited misfortunes he pathetically laments. At first view it appears rather mystical; but a close examination will disclose the secret, which is but too apparent, in spite of the slight veil which he has thrown over it. One particular portion of this performance we shall point out, as most worthy of remark. It is that where the author descants on the hard fate of a great brother poet, which, in the most trying circumstances of his life, bears so near a resemblance to a certain disastrous period of his own history. The poet here puts all his own heart-rending sorrows into the mouth of another; and perhaps, in no passage throughout the whole of his works did he feel so sensibly, and pourtray so feelingly:

"'Tis the doom
Of spirits of my order to be rack'd
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;
Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known
The name of him—who now is but a name,
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,
Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded—fame;
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die
Is nothing; but to wither thus—to tame
My mind down from its own infinity—

To live in narrow ways with little men,
A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,
Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things
That make communion sweet, and soften pain—
To feel me in the solitude of kings
Without the power that makes them bear a crown—
To envy every dove his nest and wings
Which waft him where the Appennine looks down
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,
Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that *fatal she*,
Their mother, the *cold partner* who hath brought
Destruction for a dowry:—this to see
And feel, and know without repair, hath taught
A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,
They made an EXILE,—not a *slave* of ME."

The reader will, no doubt, instantly see through the transparent veil, and draw the conclusion, that the author has in his "mind's eye" his own unfortunate marriage, and that he pourtrays his own sincere sentiments of the ever to be lamented wretchedness attending the union. If any shadow of doubt can remain after so serious an attention, the note attached to the text must clear it away.

This lady (the *fatal she*, Dante's wife) whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelf families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*admodum morosa*,

ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus,"—very morose, as we read of Xantippe, the wife of Socrates the philosopher, according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalized with Boccace, in his "*Life of Dante,*" for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccacio non ha pazienza, e dice, le moglie esser contrarie agli studii; e non si ricorda che Socrate il più nobile filosofo, che mai fusse, ebbe moglie, e figluoli e ufficii della Republica nella sua città; e Aristotele che, &c. &c. ebbe due moglie in varii tempi, ed ebbe figluoli, e richezze assai.—E Marco Tullio—e Catone—e Varrone—e Seneca—ebbero moglie,* &c. &c." It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for any thing I know, of Aristotle, are *not* the most felicitous. Tully's Terentia and Socrates' Xantippe by no means contributed to their husband's happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy; Cato gave away his wife; of Varro's we know nothing; and of Seneca's only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered, and lived several years afterwards.

* "Here Boccace loses patience, and says that wives are obstacles to study; and forgets that Socrates, the most noble philosopher that ever was, had wives and children, and held state offices; and Aristotle, who, &c. &c. had two wives at various times, and had children and plenty of riches. And Marcus Tullius—and Cato—and Varro—and Seneca—had wives, &c. &c."

This last poem was written at *Ravenna*,—on the very spot where the ashes of Dantè, the greatest poet of Italy, repose. Lord Byron was not of a disposition to rest long in any settled place of habitation; his body, like his mind, must always be kept in a state of perpetual motion; and his movements were as uncertain as the wind. At one moment he would be in an undress, as if preparing for writing, reading, or some other sedentary employment; in an instant, he would throw down pen or book, change his dress, mount on horseback, and set off, no one knew for what destination, nor perhaps did he himself know. Although his head-quarters were established at Venice, yet he seldom remained there for any length of time together. He had a small gondola, or pleasure-boat, in which he sometimes sailed to the opposite continent and the Ionian Islands, and he visited in turn Rome, Milan, Naples, and Sicily. His travelling equipage was at once devoid of parade, plain, commodious, and adapted to every occasion, as well as provided against every emergency. His dress consisted of a brown cloth waistcoat and trowsers, with silver buttons, buff-leather boots, a large white hat, and a green silk cloak over all; a red morocco belt round his waist held his stiletto; a small silver star and a cross on his left breast were the only appendages that denoted any thing like superior rank. His horse, which was named '*Mazeppa*,' was a small

grey Arabian, full of fire like its rider, and in his holster he carried two brace of double-barrelled pistols; a portmanteau behind him held a change of linen, &c. &c., and a leather case on the right shoulder of his horse contained materials for writing and drawing.

Thus accoutred, Lord Byron set out from Venice, accompanied by a friend; and, after a rambling excursion along the coast, they reached Ravenna, and put up at a little wine-house in the suburbs, where it appeared that his Lordship was no stranger, though they did not know either his real name or his quality. An old man, a woman, a boy, and a lovely young girl about seventeen years of age, were the only inmates. The latter was tall, finely shaped, with features purely Grecian; indeed she was a Greek, of the island of Mytilene. She was no stranger to Lord Byron, for tears of joy came into her fine eyes as soon as she saw him, and the pleasure of recognition appeared to be mutual. There was something in her history known only to herself and Lord Byron, and which is now buried with herself in the silent tomb. Lord Byron's MSS. might have developed the secret, but, as will be related hereafter, they were entrusted to the care of Count Gamba, and were all thrown overboard, when the latter was captured by a Turkish frigate, on his passage from Zante to Missalonghi.

The next morning, Lord Byron repaired to the

cathedral during divine service, remarking that he thought it every man's duty to pay respect to religion, and, in so doing, to conform to the custom of the country he was in. He did so wherever he went, and he observed, that this mode of conduct disarmed many of his enemies and gained him many new friends.

With similar views to conciliation, no less than prompted by his own benevolent nature, he became a subscriber to the Lying-in-Institution, and also to the Library of Ancient Literature. To the latter he presented a volume dug from the ruins of Herculaneum, and what, perhaps, (in the estimation of the superior) was of more value, a donation of one hundred crowns. To the charity school he was also a subscriber, and he gave the children of both sexes (nearly 200) a holiday, and a shilling each, to make merry. One of them pointed out to his Lordship the ruinous state of a small wooden bridge which led to the fields, and whose impassable state obliged them to take a circuitous route of a mile before they could get to them. His Lordship instantly got it repaired, observing, " I remember the time when if disappointed of a run in the fields, it would have nearly broken my heart."

His Lordship's visits to the wine-house were only occasional; he had, besides, a residence at an hotel in the city (in the street of St. Jerome), where he was visited by families of the first rank.

He bespoke an opera, which was attended by all the fashionables of Ravenna, and no one attracted more attention than his female Greek friend. All eyes were fixed upon her: but she shrank from their gaze with native simplicity and modesty, and seemed only happy when cultivating her little garden in the suburbs, and preparing for his Lordship's reception.

An act of courage and generosity, which passed under Lord Byron's eyes, brought him acquainted with a strange character, and involved him in some singular adventures. Francisco Silveira was once the most popular preacher in that city, father confessor to several noble families, and almost regarded as a tutelar saint. He was young, handsome, with strong passions, and a warm heart. An intrigue, which took place between him and the young and beautiful Countess of Pella, was detected by her husband, a man nearly or quite seventy years of age; and as it took place in one of the churches, the crime was carried before the court of Rome, and the guilty ecclesiastic was not only deprived of his dignity, but for ever excluded from the pale of holy mother church. Thus were matters circumstanced when he came under Lord Byron's notice, who, gained by his bravery and other eminent qualities, applied, through the medium of Sir William A'Court, then Secretary of Legation at Naples, to get him rein-

stated, but in vain: the Holy Father was inexorable, and Lord Byron took Francisco under his immediate protection. His Lordship wrote a dramatic piece, intitled "*The Fortunes of Francisco,*" which was performed with the utmost applause. The family of Count Pella was present, and were so enraged at certain parts of the representation, that the Count's nephew (an officer in the Neapolitan Marines) came round to Lord Byron's box, and called him a scoundrel for protecting Silveira, who was the presumed author of the piece. A scuffle ensued, and Lord Byron disarmed his antagonist, and gave him his life. Captain Fullinton, of the Russian navy, happened to be at the theatre, and drew his sword on the side of his Lordship. The tumult ended with mutual explanations and concessions; and on the following day the municipality, in a body, waited on Lord Byron, to express their regret at the indignity which had been offered to him. Lord Byron then avowed himself the author of the drama, and declared that he was ready and willing to answer any demands that might be made upon him on that score. Here the matter apparently rested; but whether the assassination which took place in the streets of Ravenna, opposite to the door of Lord Byron's residence, as mentioned by Lord Byron in some stanzas of "*Don Juan,*" was occasioned by this affray, he has not informed us;

and the only probable conjecture is, that they were cause and effect. The stanzas alluded to are as follows:

"The other evening ('twas on Friday last)—
This is a fact, and no poetic fable—
Just as my great coat was about me cast,
My hat and gloves still lying on the table,
I heard a shot—'twas eight o'clock—scarce past—
And running out, as fast as I was able,
I found the military commandant
Stretch'd in the street, and able scarce to pant.

"Poor fellow! for some reason, surely bad,
They'd slain him with five slugs, and left him there
To perish on the pavement: so I had
Him borne into the house, and up the stair,
And stripp'd, and look'd to—But, why should I add
More circumstance? vain was ev'ry care;
The man was gone: in some Italian quarrel,
Kill'd by five bullets from an old gun-barrel."

In a note on this passage, Lord Byron informs the reader that the assassination took place on the 8th December 1820, in the streets of Ravenna, not a hundred paces from the residence of the writer. The circumstances were as described. There was found close by him an old gun-barrel, sawn half off, it had just been discharged, and was still warm.

There is the greatest probability that this shot was intended either for Francisco or his Lordship, as the latter had proved himself too skilful for any open antagonist with the sword, and too powerful

to be borne down by the arm of the law. However this might have been, his Lordship seems to have very wisely *taken the hint*, for one morning, without any previous intimation of his intention, he broke up from Ravenna, and marched away without beat of drum, attended by his female friend (Amelia), Francisco, and Captain Fullinton. They reached *Descree*, the nearest port, and embarked on board a Greek vessel bound to Limosel, in the island of Cyprus.

The accommodations on board were very inconvenient, and the passage very boisterous; but Lord Byron was devoid of fear, and loved on every opportunity to display his nautical skill, for which he had here sufficient exercise. The authorities received his Lordship with a degree of enthusiasm, as his name every where preceded him, and he was throughout Greece regarded as a brother Greek. Old Demetrius, with whom they took up their abode, was most hearty in their welcome. His house was situated under the hill at *Cape Corso*, at a distance from the town, and in rather a solitary spot; but that circumstance occasioned his Lordship no apprehension. The prospect was agreeable. The vessels might be seen gliding in and out of Limosel, with a distant view of Candia; and the classic recollections that crowd on the mind, of being on the spot where *Sappho* wrote, and *Venus* was worshipped as sovereign ruler of the world, is quite sufficient to enrapture

the senses. It soon became, however, the source of grief, as Amelia was seized with a fever, and breathed her last. Lord Byron secluded himself for some days, until Captain Fullinton had paid the last sad rites to the remains of poor Amelia, when he applied himself to soothe his Lordship's grief, who at length began to resume his usual rambling excursions and serenity of mind.

The town of Limosel is famous for having been the rendezvous of the British squadron which blockaded Alexandria, after the great battle of the Nile, when the British captains, in order to get supplies of provisions, were compelled to fire upon the citadel, and to bombard the place, which is the only argument adapted to carry conviction to Turkish minds. His Lordship pointed out several marks of the shots on the walls; but what interested his companions still more, was the spring which he showed them to the westward of the mosque, where his Lordship was sitting and composing "*The Corsair*," when a Turk, from the bushes, fired a shot, which struck the portfolio and drove it out of his hand. We asked what his Lordship did on so trying an occasion?—"I only removed," answered he, "to a more secure place, nearer to the town, as it was useless to pursue the assassin."—Some one inquired what cause his Lordship had given the Turk for so murderous and cowardly an attempt? "God knows; perhaps cause enough; but, at all events,

I am not going to confess my sins to you, though you might promise me absolution.'" They put what conjectures they pleased upon this answer, for they could get none other.

His Lordship was excessively mistrustful of the Turks, and in truth he had latterly seen enough of them to make him so. He would therefore suffer only half the boat's crew to land at a time, and ordered the other half to keep strict watch on board, with loaded guns, as he said the Governor himself was very likely to send men by night to plunder the vessel, and then lay the deed at the door of the pirates. To evince the probability of similar treachery, he told the following adventure: "I remember," said his Lordship, "once being at anchor under the isle of *Anti-Paros,* in the Grecian Archipelago, and ready to sail when, in the dusk of the evening, a little girl, to whom we had given some paras in charity when on shore, swam alongside; she was nearly exhausted, having swam full an English mile. She informed us that the Turks were preparing four boats to attack us at midnight and murder us, as they suspected our having riches, from paying with gold for every thing we purchased. We immediately got under sail, but it was calm, and unfortunately we made little or no way, so that at midnight, through my glass, I plainly perceived the boats advancing fast. We had only two guns, which we loaded nearly to the muzzle, with three

round shot, and loose musket-balls; the crew was well provided with small arms, pistols, and sabres, and, what was still better, with stout hearts; for they roundly swore that they would all perish rather than be made slaves. That I told them was out of the question, as they were certain of being murdered by the Turks, if they suffered them to step on board. There were nineteen of us, twelve English, and seven Venetians, fortified by despair. Two of the boats advanced nearly within shot, when they commenced firing. Only one of their shot struck our vessel; and, imagining our Greek guns could reach them, they were fired. The mast of the first boat fell; and the fellows uttered a loud scream and dropped astern, preparing, no doubt, for another attack in conjunction with their comrades. However a light breeze sprung up, and spreading all our canvas and plying our oars, at day-light we were out of sight of the robbers and murderers, and the Venetian sailors, in pouring libations down their throats to drown their late apprehensions, congratulated each other on having obtained a *great and glorious* victory." It is right here to remark, that from another quarter we learned that the little Greek wench, who had been the means of saving all their lives, was promised by Lord Byron his protection and support so long as she lived. At Cape Otranto, three years after this notable event, she married an Italian fisherman.

Lord Byron portioned her most liberally, and, carrying them to Venice, purchased a fishing-vessel of eighteen tons burthen, in which her husband became what he thought in very opulent circumstances; and they were so grateful, that it was with difficulty they could be made to receive payment for the fish with which they supplied Lord Byron's table.

Francisco, whilst his Lordship travelled round the island, remained with Demetrius, and made himself not only agreeable to the old man, but his niece. A proposal was made by Demetrius to take Francisco into his service as a manager, at a very liberal salary, and Lord Byron was happy to settle him so comfortably for life. One morning, his Lordship went out early, as was by no means unusual with him, no one venturing at any time to take notice of any of his movements, which would have given him the greatest offence. In about two hours after his departure, the door was surrounded by Turks, making a most horrible outcry, and vowing vengeance on the heads of all the Christian dogs. Captain Fullinton, Francisco, and Lord Byron's suite, were confined in a close room, guarded by six Turks, armed with pistols and sabres, and thirsting for the blood of their devoted victims. The captain growled and swore, and Francisco, for the first time since he had been expelled the church, prayed to all the saints in the calendar for protection. It was said that his

Lordship had shot a Turk, and got safe on board, so that those left behind deemed their doom was sealed, and their death certain. Demetrius had obtained permission to go to the Governor, and by a well-timed bribe he discovered the truth: the Turks wished to have it believed that their comrade was killed, in order to extort money from the prisoners; but he was alive, and only very slightly wounded. The fellow, presuming on the law for disarming all persons in the Grecian Islands, had insisted upon Lord Byron's yielding up his arms, which he intended to appropriate to his own use. Lord Byron resisted, and fired, with the intention only of terrifying the scoundrel, who instantly fled, and Lord Byron, aware of the consequences of such an action, got on board his own vessel, which was standing off and on in the bay. The captives were well assured that he would use every effort for their liberation, and would even surrender himself rather than suffer others to be punished for his own act; but even that, perhaps, would not ensure their safety. Demetrius having claimed Francisco as his servant, he was released, and soon after brought the dismal tidings that all was now lost, as a Turkish frigate had just arrived in the bay and made prize of Lord Byron's vessel, which was moored under her stern. The guns of the frigate and the fort were heard saluting each other, and seemed to announce the death knell of the prisoners. The guards at length came to

conduct them to the Governor, and they were taken by a circuitous route into the garden of the palace, fearing they should be executed secretly, as is usual with the Mussulmans. They passed through a long hall, lined with soldiers, with drawn sabres in their hands; and were brought into the Governor's presence, who regarded them most ferociously. Matters wore the most dismal aspect, and they expected orders for their instant execution, when the doors were thrown open, and Lord Byron entered the hall with Hassan Hadgee, the captain of the Turkish frigate (with whom he had been well acquainted during his stay at Constantinople); and followed by Francisco, who had contrived to get on board the vessel and acquaint Lord Byron with the dreadful situation into which his imprudence had brought his friends. The captain of the frigate, on being apprized of all the circumstances, landed with Lord Byron; matters were soon settled to the satisfaction of the Governor, and a present made to the soldiers rendered them loud in praise of the infidels, whose throats but a few moments before they had been eager for the signal of cutting.

A longer stay in Cyprus would not have been safe, so after making acknowledgments to the Turkish captain, Lord Byron and friends got on board and set sail, hoping never more to set eyes on Cyprus; at least under the *verge de feu* of the Mussulman savages.

CHAPTER II.

Lord Byron brings out three dramatic pieces at once: "Sardanapalus,"—"The two Foscari,"—and a Mystery intitled "Cain;" the latter work pirated: and on a motion to stop the sale, the Lord High Chancellor refuses, alledging that the work is of an improper tendency. Lord Byron vindicates his publisher, and takes the blame wholly on himself.—The Rev. Mr. Styles preaches and publishes against Lord Byron's Cain and other works.—He is reminded of Æsop's Fable of the Ass and the Sick Lion.

Lord Byron was not a man to be intimidated by the sneer of criticism, nor to be daunted by the public diapprobation of his dramatic attempt. The former he repelled by giving blow for blow; and he determined to show his disregard of the latter by pursuing his own course. He avowed that he did not write for the stage, and if his tragedy was not hailed with applause in the theatre, it was sure to be read by every man of taste in the closet.

Very shortly after the appearance of "*Marino Faliero,*" he brought forward a volume containing three dramatic pieces, two of them regularly constructed tragedies, and the third styled (after the old English fashion of compositions founded on scriptural stories) a *mystery*. These dramas were

ushered into the world by the following introductory observations, in which the author avows his determination of following his own judgment in preference of bowing to the taste of the public:

" In publishing the following tragedies, I have only to repeat that they were not composed with the most remote view of the stage.

" On the attempt made by the Managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already exhibited.

" With regard to my own private feelings, as it seems that they are to stand for nothing, I shall say nothing.

" For the historical foundation of the following compositions the reader is referred to the notes.

" The author has, in one instance, attempted to preserve, and in the other to approach, the '*unities*,' conceiving that with any very distant departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama. He is aware of the unpopularity of this notion in the present state of English literature; but it is not a system of his own, being merely an opinion which, not very long ago, was the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so in the more civilized parts of it. But '*nous avons changé tout cela*,' and are reaping the advantage of the change. The writer is far from conceiving that any thing he can adduce by personal precept or example, can at all approach his regular or even irregular predecessors: he is merely giving

a reason why he preferred the more regular formation of a structure, however feeble, to an entire abandonment of all rules whatsoever. Where he has failed, the failure is in the architect, and not in the art."

After this previous declaration of the author, that the productions were not designed for stage representation, they cannot be criticised as such, but must be considered only as poems, constructed in the nature of dramas. Indeed, after the failure of "*Marino Faliero*," no attempt was made to bring forward either of the others. They must be therefore considered as companions for the closet, and cabinet curiosities.

The story of "*Sardânapalus*," the title of the first of these tragedies, is too well known to dwell long upon. He was the last of the descendants of Nimrod, and with him the Assyrian empire came to an end. He is represented as a most effeminate, luxurious debauchee, in a season of prosperity; but, in times of adversity, when roused by the approach of danger, conducting his armies with the courage and skill of an experienced warrior. Young, thoughtless, witty, spoiled by flattery and unlimited power, he affects to despise the achievements of his hardy ancestors, that he may give free indulgence to his appetites. The queen, who thinks herself neglected, and her brother, Salamenes, undertake to school him, and only make him more obstinately bent on continuing the same

course. He makes a plaything and jest of every serious bent, and flouts and rallies every one with princely good-humour. He slights his queen, merely because love to her would be an act of duty. His mistress, *Myrrha*,* he considers only as a toy of the moment, whose wit, eloquence, and courage serve to amuse him. He terms her "a slave, who loves from passion," and declares that he should love her more if she were something less heroic. Myrrha, however (a Greek slave), is by far the most beautiful character, the life and soul of the piece: beautiful, heroic, constant, loving the generous, infatuated monarch, yet ashamed of his weakness and follies; endeavouring to ennoble his life, and to prepare him to meet death with firmness, she fills the most material part of the drama, and is truly an interesting personage, and, with the exception of the monarch, the only one almost throughout. A few specimens of each will serve to give an idea:

"*Sar.* Thou think'st that I have wrong'd the queen:
Is't not so?
Sal. Think! Thou hast wrong'd her.
Sar. Patience, prince, and hear me.
She has all power and splendour of her station,
Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,
The homage and the appanage of sovereignty.

* Is not this character of "*Myrrha*" somewhat resembling that of his Lordship's Venetian Countess of G——? And that of the queen is not much unlike a certain noble lady's!!

I married her as monarchs wed—for state,
And loved her as most husbands love their wives.
If she or thou supposed'st I could link me
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,
You knew nor me, nor monarchs, nor mankind.
Sal. I pray thee, change the theme; my blood disdains
Complaint, and Salamene's sister seeks not
Reluctant love, even from Assyria's lord!
Nor would she deign to accept divided passion
With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.
The queen is silent..... ...
..... 'Tis most true;
I own thy merit in those founded cities,
But for a whim, recorded with a verse
Which shames both them and thee to coming ages.
Sar. Shame me! By Baal, the cities, though well built,
Are not more goodly than the verse! Say what
Thou wilt 'gainst the truth of that brief record:
Why those few lines contain the history
Of all things human; hear—" Sardanapalus
" The King, the son of Anacyndaraxes,
" In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.
" Eat, drink, and love; the rest's not worth a fillip."
Sal. A worthy moral, and a wise inscription
For a king to put up before his subjects!
Sar. Oh, thou wouldst have me, doubtless, set up edicts—
" Obey the king—contribute to his treasure—
" Fall down and worship, or get up and toil."
Or thus—" Sardanapalus on this spot
" Slew fifty thousand of his enemies;
" These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy."
I leave such things to conquerors; enough
For me, if I can make my subjects feel
The weight of human misery less, and glide
Ungroaning to the tomb; I take no license
Which I deny to them. We all are men.

Sal. Thy sires have been revered as gods.
Sar. In dust
And death, where they are neither gods nor men,
Talk not of such to me! the worms are gods;
At least they banquetted upon your gods,
And died for lack of further nutriment.
Those gods were merely men; look to their issue—
I feel a thousand mortal things about me,
But nothing godlike—unless it may be
The thing which you condemn, a disposition
To love and to be merciful, to pardon
The follies of my species, and (that's human)
To be indulgent to my own."

Myrrha expostulates with the monarch in the following terms:—

"Frown not on me; you have smiled
Too often on me not to make those frowns
Bitterer to bear than any punishment
Which they may augur.—King, I am your subject!
Master, I am your slave! Man, I have loved you!—
Loved you, I know not by what fatal weakness,
Although a Greek, and born a foe to monarchs—
A slave, and hating fetters—an Ionian,
And, therefore, when I love a stranger, more
Degraded by that passion than by chains!
Still I have lov'd you. If that love were strong
Enough to overcome all former nature,
Shall it not claim the privilege to save you?"

Again, when the rebellion breaks out, and it is told to Myrrha that—

"The King! the King fights as he revels!
Myrrha. 'Tis no dishonour—no—
'Tis no dishonour to have lov'd this man.

I almost wish now, what I never wish'd
Before, that he were Grecian. If Alcides
Were 'shamed in wearing Lydian Omphale's
She-garb, and wielding her vile distaff; surely
He, who springs up a Hercules at once,
Nurs'd in effeminate arts from youth to manhood,
And rushes from the banquet to the battle,
As though it were a bed of love, deserves
That a Greek girl should be his paramour,
And a Greek bard his minstrel, a Greek tomb
His monument!"—

One scene is so extremely applicable to Lord Byron's own family affairs, and abounds with so much pathos and soul-touching emotion, that it would be an unpardonable omission in a writer of his life not to point out so strong a congruity; and the reader will have no objection, we hope, to our giving those striking passages somewhat at length. It is the first scene in the fourth act, between Sardanapalus and Zarina, his queen.

Zarina.

"Alone with him! How many a year has past,
Though we are still so young, since we have met,
Which I have worn in widowhood of heart.
He loved me not: yet he seems little changed—
Changed to me only—would the change were mutual!
He speaks not—scarce regards me—not a word—
Nor look—yet he was soft of voice and aspect,
Indifferent, not severe. My Lord!

Sar. Zarina!

Zar. No, *not* Zarina—do not say Zarina.
That tone—that word—annihilate long years,
And things which make them longer.

Sar. 'Tis too late
To think of these past dreams. Let's not reproach—
That is, reproach me not—for the *last* time—
Zar. And *first*. I ne'er reproach'd you.
Sar. 'Tis most true;
And that reproof comes heavier on my heart
Than—But our hearts are not in our power.
Zar. Nor hands; but I gave both.
Sar. Your brother said,
It was your will to see me, ere you went
From Nineveh with— (*He hesitates.*)
Zar. Our children: it is true.
I wish'd to thank you that you have not divided
My heart from all that's left it now to love—
Those who are yours and mine, who look like you,
And look upon me as you look'd upon me
Once.—But they have not changed.
Sar. Nor ever will.
I fain would have them dutiful.
Zar. I cherish
Those infants, not alone from the blind love
Of a fond mother, but as a fond woman.
They are now the only tie between us.
Sar. Deem not
I have not done you justice: rather make them
Resemble your own line, than their own sire.
Zar. They ne'er
Shall know from me of aught but what may honour
Their father's memory.
Sar. Rather let them hear
The truth from you than from a trampling world.
If they be in adversity, they'll learn
Too soon the scorn of crowds for crownless princes,
And find that all their father's sins are theirs.
My boys! I could have borne it were I childless.
Znr. Oh! do not say so—do not poison all

My peace left, by unwishing that thou wert
A father.—
Sar. 'Tis lost, all earth will cry out—thank your father!
And they will swell the echo with a curse.—
A brother I have injur'd—children whom
I have neglected—and a spouse—
Zar. Who loves.
Sar. And pardons?
Zar. I have never thought of this
And cannot pardon till I have condemn'd.
Sar. My wife!
Zar. Now blessings on thee for that word!
I never thought to hear it more from thee.
Sar. My gentle, wrong'd Zarina!
I am the very slave of circumstance
And impulse—borne away with every breath!
Misplaced upon the throne—misplaced in life,
I know not what I could have been, but feel
I am not what I should be—let it end.
But take this with thee; if I was not form'd
To prize a love like thine, a mind like thine,
Nor dote even on thy beauty—as I've doted
On lesser charms, for no cause save that such
Devotion was a duty, and I hated
All that look'd like a chain for me or others
(This even rebellion must avouch); yet hear
These words, perhaps among my last—that none
E'er valued more thy virtues, though he knew not
To profit by them—as the miner lights
Upon a vein of virgin ore, discovering
That which avails him nothing: he hath found it,
But 'tis not his—but some superior's, who
Plac'd him to dig, but not divide the wealth
Which sparkles at his feet; not dare he lift
Nor poise it, but must grovel on upturning
The sullen earth.—

Zar. Oh! if thou hast at length
Discover'd that my love is worth esteem,
I ask no more—

Enter Salamenes.

Sal. I must part ye—
The moments, which must not be lost, are passing.

Sar. Go, then. If e'er we meet again, perhaps
I may be worthier of you—and, if not,
Remember that my faults, tho' not atoned for,
Are *ended*. Yet I dread thy nature will
Grieve more above the blighted name and ashes
Which once were mightiest in Assyria—than—
But I grow womanish again, and must not:
I must learn sternness now. My sins have all
Been of the softer order—*hide* thy tears—
I do not bid thee *not* to shed them—'twere
Easier to stop Euphrates at its source,
Than one tear of a true and tender heart—
But let me not behold them; they unman me
Here when I had remann'd myself. My brother,
Lead her away.—

(*Salamenes bears her off.*

This, too—
And this too must I suffer—I, who never
Inflicted purposely on human hearts
A voluntary pang! But that is false—
She loved me, and I loved her. Fatal passion!
Why didst thou not *at once* expire in hearts
Which thou hast lighted up at once? Zarina!
I must pay dearly for the desolation
Now brought upon thee. Had I never loved
But thee, I should have been an unopposed
Monarch of honouring nations. To what gulphs
A single deviation from the track
Of human duties leads even those who claim
The homage of mankind as their born due,
And find it, till they forfeit it themselves!"

These speeches of a contrite husband, and of a fond, forgiving wife, are so strongly depicted, that, knowing the circumstances under which the author was placed, it is impossible not to believe that they were his own particular thoughts, uppermost in his fancy sleeping or awake. The charitable heart will at least hope, and feel ready to believe that his Lordship was sensible of his errors, and deeply lamented their sad effects. It is not at all likely that the man who could pen the above scenes, should send to his now *widowed* wife, at the very moment he was writing them, lines replete with the most bitter sarcasm and cruel insult! The reader will recollect that the marriage of Lord and Lady Byron took place on the 2d January 1815, and, *if* we may believe the "*Literary Gazette*," his Lordship, on the 2d January 1821, sent Lady Byron the following epigram:—

"This day of all hath surely done
Its worst to me and you;
'Tis now six years since we were one,
And five since we were two."

The reader may choose whether he will believe that Lord Byron could be guilty of so cruel and unmanly an insult, or that some drivelling scribbler has attempted to palm his own Grub-street wit upon the proprietor of the *Literary Gazette*, as a genuine effusion of the noble bard. Lord Byron once patronized, but ever afterwards turned

his back upon the *Literary Gazette*, which may account for its enmity.

The next piece "*The Two Foscari*," has not the advantage of the preceding one, of being founded on a probable and pleasing plot; the whole story turns on incidents peculiarly overstrained; and, for want of sufficient development (in pursuance of the author's determination to stick to the *unities*) so far from apparent to the reader, as to engage little sympathy. The younger Foscari feigns himself a traitor that he might be recalled from banishment, and undergoes the torture twice (once in the hearing of the audience), and dies a victim to the love of his country; while the other Foscari submits, without resistance, to this treatment of his son, that he may not be implicated in his guilt, which is however doubtful. He is overawed by Loredano, who rules the *Council of Ten*, and bears an Italian grudge to the Foscari family for the supposed murder of his father and uncles. Marina, the wife of the younger Foscari, makes up with her tongue for the tame submission of her father-in-law, and lets loose the venom of her speech on the hateful oppressor. There is a great defect of interest throughout the piece, and yet there are abundance of passages that make the reader regret their being misplaced, like beautiful flowers in a dreary waste. The speech of Jacopo, from the window, while describing the amusements of his youth, must have

been dictated from the author's remembrance of his own boyish days; and an amusement of which, as has been several times before observed, he was peculiarly fond:

"Limbs! how often have they borne me
Bounding o'er yon blue tide, as I have skimm'd
The gondola-along in childish race,
And, masked as a young gondolier, amidst
My gay competitors, noble as I,
Raced for our pleasure in the pride of strength,
While the fair populace of crowding beauties,
Plebeian as patrician, cheer'd us on
With dazzing smiles, and wishes audible,
And waving kerchiefs, and applauding hands,
Even to the goal!—How many a time have I
Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more daring,
The wave all roughen'd; with a swimmer's stroke
Flinging the billows back from my drench'd hair,
And laughing from my lip the audacious brine,
Which kiss'd it like a wine cup, rising o'er
The waves as they arose, and prouder still
The loftier they uplifted me; and oft,
In wantonness of spirit, plunging down
Into their green and glassy gulphs, and making
My way to shells and sea-weed, all unseen
By those above, till they wax'd fearful; then
Returning with my grasp full of such token
As show'd that I had searched the deep: exulting,
With a far-dashing stroke, and drawing deep
The long suspended breath, again I spurn'd
The foam which broke around me, and pursued
My track like a sea-bird.—I was a boy then."

When Marina endeavours to console her husband under the sentence of banishment, she re-

minds him that it was by *exiles* his beloved native city, Venice, was founded:

Mar. And yet you see how from their banishment
Before the Tartar into these salt isles,
Their antique energy of mind, all that
Remained of Rome for their inheritance,
Created by degrees an ocean-Rome;
And shall an evil, which so often leads
To good, depress thee thus?—
Jac. Fos. Had I gone forth
From my own land, like the old patriarchs, seeking
Another region, with their flocks and herds;
Had I been cast out like the Jews from Zion,
Or like our fathers, driven by Attila
From fertile Italy to barren islets,
I would have given some tears to my late country,
And many thoughts; but afterwards address'd
Myself, with those about me, to create
A new home, and fresh state: perhaps I could
Have borne this—though I know not.
Mar. Wherefore not?
It was the lot of millions, and must be
The fate of myriads more.
Jac. Fos. Ay—we but hear
Of the survivors' toil in their new lands,
Their numbers and success; but who can number
The hearts which broke in silence of that parting,
Or after their departure; of that malady
Which calls up green and native fields to view
From the rough deep, with such identity,
To the poor exile's fever'd eye, that he
Can scarcely be restrain'd from treading them?
That melody, which out of tones and tunes
Collects such pasture for the longing sorrow
Of the sad mountaineer, when far away

From his snow canopy of cliffs and clouds,
That he feeds on the sweet, but poisonous thought,
And dies. You call this *weakness!* It is strength,
I say,—the parent of all honest feeling.
He who loves not his country, can love nothing."

Of Lord Byron's dramatic writings there can be but one opinion: that, as they were not written, so they are not calculated for the English stage (without much alteration), and that it is a pity that they were not written for it. The beautiful images and poetry dispersed throughout them (and particularly in Sardanapalus), must make every one regret that such a drama should not have been so arranged by the noble bard himself as to have afforded by its representation delight to the present and future generations. There is too often a pride in genius that scorns the judgment of the world, and yet no men are so liable to err as men of genius. Their history throughout is but a tissue of failures and misfortunes, and even our bard himself might have avoided most of his heart-rending pangs, if he would but have submitted to the rules of common life. But like his own "*Sardanapalus*," he covered himself with the ægis of his wit, and laughed to scorn both advice and advisers. He who keeps himself aloof from the world, is but ill qualified to make an appeal to their feelings, and the drama is nothing else than such an appeal; and the holding up a mirror to human nature. If the author do not pourtray the feelings, frailties and workings of humanity, his audience can never sympathize

with him. If he deviates from nature, they will reject his art, as too cold a substitute. Shakespeare had very little knowledge, more than that of mankind in general; yet what a noble and unbounded use does he make of it! He exhausts this world, and travels to realms unknown: yet he never exceeds nor opposes, but always keeps within the limits of the popular belief and superstitions of his age. He writes solely to please his audience; and he invariably succeeds, where many of far superior literary acquirements have totally failed. The greatest wits of Queen Anne's days combined together to decry, and even to ridicule him, as the poet of a rude and barbarous age. Dryden and Lansdowne re-cast his "*Tempest*" and "*Merchant of Venice,*" and their vile imitations superseded the originals for a short time, to the disgrace of the age; but when the frenzy subsided, the immortal old bard was reinstated in his supremacy, which he has ever since maintained, and is in no danger of being ever again dethroned. With Dryden, Otway, Lee, and Rowe, the dramatic genius decreased gradually, and wholly died away with Congreve, Young, Lillo, and Home. Lord Byron, if any man in the world could have revived the dying embers, was the best qualified for the glorious task; but he either really entertained, or feigned a contempt for popularity. It was a false pride; or why did he write at all? There can be but one motive for a

man's *publishing* his works. He may write to amuse his leisure hours; but if he publishes the amusements of his leisure hours, he solicits the public approbation. Lord Byron himself acknowledges this, when he more than once produces part of a work, and if that should meet with the public approval he promises more, as in the Prefaces to the two first cantos of "*Childe Harold*" and in that of "*Dantè.*" Why, then, should he have been more fastidious in his dramatic productions? It is hard to guess, unless success had rendered him less complaisant and more unyielding. He would not be content to succeed by following the steps which Shakespeare had trodden before him, and he failed; he measured his strength with Otway (one greatly inferior to Shakespeare), and he was defeated. The bard would not submit to be dictated to; and the public had an equal right to refuse to submit to his dictation. He would not write to please their taste, and they would not applaud dramas written according to his own: and thus the matter rested.

The third and last piece of this volume was a Mystery, intitled "*Cain,*" in imitation of those ancient interludes which were written solely on scriptural subjects, and peformed at first chiefly in churches, by monks, &c. The reader, who may wish for further information on this head, may refer to Dr. Johnson's Preface, or Mr. Malone's Historical Account of the English Stage; but it is

useless to go into any inquiry here, as the title "Mystery" is only a kind of envelope, under cover of which the author chose to send this strange performance into the world. Of its merits and demerits the public has heard a great deal, it having afforded a discussion in the highest court of the realm; but it would, notwithstanding, be improper in a biographer of Lord Byron, to pass over any of his works unnoticed, as well as apparently a shrinking from a duty which is necessarily imposed upon one in his situation. The work opens with the following Preface:—"The following scenes are entitled 'A Mystery,' in conformity with the ancient title annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which were styled 'Mysteries,' or 'Moralities.' The author has by no means taken the same liberties with his subject which were common formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious enough to refer to those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish. The author has endeavoured to preserve the language adapted to his character; and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken from actual *Scripture*, he has made as little alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would permit. The reader will recollect that the book of Genesis does not state that Eve was tempted by a Demon, but by 'the Serpent;' and that only because he was 'the most subtle of all the beasts of the field.' Whatever interpre-

tation the Rabbins and the Fathers may have put upon this, I must take the words as I find them, and reply with Bishop Watson, upon similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted to him, as Moderator in the schools of Cambridge—'Behold the book!' holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism. With the poems upon similar topics I have not been recently familiar. Since I was twenty I have never read Milton; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's 'Death of Abel' I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The general impression of my recollection is delight; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza. In the following pages I have called them 'Adah' and 'Zillah,' the earliest female names which occur in Genesis; they were those of Lamech's wives: those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little.

"The reader will please to bear in mind (what few choose to recollect) that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission, he may consult

'Warburton's Divine Legation;' whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have, therefore, supposed it new to Cain, without I hope any perversion of Holy Writ.

"With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman upon the same subjects; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness.

"If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the serpent, it is only because the book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to any thing of the kind, but merely to the serpent in his serpentine capacity.

"*Note.*—The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted, in this poem, the notion of Cuvier, that the world had been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-Adamite world was also peopled by rational beings, much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the Mammoth, &c. &c. is, of course, a poetical fiction, to help him to make out his case."

Adam and family offer a sacrifice, and pray to the Almighty, all but Cain, who alleges that he has no reason to be thankful for life when he must die. After fruitless remonstrances, the family depart, and Lucifer joins Cain, and acquaints him that his soul is immortal. Cain laments the ignorance of his family, and wishes to consort with spirits. The devil undertakes to be his instructor, on condition of Cain's worshipping him. He hesitates, and Adah joins them. She in vain endeavours to restrain Cain from going away with Lucifer, but the latter prevails. In the second act Lucifer carries Cain through boundless space. They enter Hades. The devil informs Cain that the spirits he sees were once men, material as himself. The whole of the scene tends only to raise in Cain a discontent at his state, and unthankfulness towards his Creator; and, having effected his purpose, he bears him back to earth. The third act opens with Cain's lamentation over his infant, whilst Adah endeavours to comfort him, and to prevail on him to join in a sacrifice which his brother is about to offer. Here one passage occurs, so sublime, beautiful, touching, and, as respects Adah's speech, so pure, and devoid of every *objectionable* matter, that although resolved at first not to give a single extract, that resolution is overpowered by the temptation :

" *Cain.* I said,
'Twere better that he ceased to live, than give

Life to so much sorrow as he must
Endure, and, harder still, bequeath; but since
That saying jars you, let us only say—
'Twere better that he never had been born.
Adah. Oh! do not say so! What were then the joys,
The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,
And loving him? Soft! he awakes. Sweet Enoch!
(*She goes to the child.*
Oh! Cain! look on him; see how full of life,
Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,
How like to me—how like to thee, when gentle,
For *then* we are *all* alike; is't not so, Cain?
Mother, and sire, and son, our features are
Reflected in each other; as they are
In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and
When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain!
And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.
Look, how he laughs and stretches out his arms,
And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine,
To hail his father; while his little form
Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain!
The childless cherubs well might envy thee
The pleasures of a parent! Bless him, Cain!
As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but
His heart will, and thine own too."

"*O si sic omnia!*" One passage of pure nature is of more value than cart-loads of metaphysical trash, which only leaves us as it found us, or worse! The sacrifices of Abel and Cain follow; the first is accepted—the second rejected. Cain, enraged, attempts to overturn the altars, and, being opposed by Abel, strikes him down with one of the firebrands. Eve curses Cain, who is sent wandering by an angel, and the faithful and affectionate Adah accompanies him.

" *Cain.* Now for the wilderness.

(*Adah stoops down, and kisses the body of Abel.*

Adah. A dreary, and an early doom, my brother,
Has been thy lot! Of all who mourn for thee,
I alone must not weep. My office is
Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them;
But yet, of all who mourn, none mourn like me,
Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee.
Now, Cain! I will divide the burden with thee."

Our objection lies *in limine*, and in defiance of the authority of Milton, Gesner, Cowley, &c., to the dramatising of scriptural subjects, upon any account whatever; but, more especially, to the putting speeches, the inventions of human minds, the effusions of our weak, frail, fallible understandings, into the lips of the Almighty, all-powerful and all-wise; but still more particularly into those of the Evil Spirit. If the former, we commit the unpardonable presumption of making God speak like a mere mortal; if the latter, in order to preserve what we are taught to believe to be his character, we must make him talk blasphemously. Many things may be conceived in the imagination, which it would be impious and blasphemous to give utterance to. We cannot presume otherwise than that the Devil should talk irreverently of the Power against which he has dared to rebel, and by which he has been crushed; but how the mind of that man must be employed who tasks his imagination to embody such blasphemy, one shudders to think! We should confine ourselves to our own mortal sphere,

to nature. The man who could fancy and embody such a speech as that of Adah over her infant son, might have given the world a delightful drama, even upon the present subject, if he had avoided all metaphysical and abstract *no*-reasonings; and, above all, had kept the Devil more in the background, and made him say no more than was absolutely necessary.—But we are heartily glad to get rid of the subject!

"*Cain*," in all probability, might have wandered about the world unnoticed and unknown, if an additional mark had not been set upon his forehead, through the piratical treatment which he met with, being held up for sale in a *sixpenny* edition. The proprietor, Mr. Murray, not choosing to put up quietly with this base infringement of his property, applied to the Court of Chancery to grant an injunction against the sale of the pirated copies. Mr. Shadwell, the counsel in support of the injunction, argued that "*Cain*" was written exactly on the model of Milton's "*Paradise Lost*," in which, as in Lord Byron's work, the Devil was the principal speaker. It was hard to object to "*Cain*" after "*Paradise Lost*" had reigned during so many years, and would last as long as there was any taste left in the country for literature. To an objection which was raised that the preface sufficiently explained the tendency of the work, which contained a direct attack upon the scriptures, he replied that the preface was no part of the work,

and might or might not have been written by the same author. His Lordship, however, entertained a different opinion on the subject, and refused the injunction, declaring that in his opinion it was of a most immoral and irreligious tendency, and, as such, had no pretensions to the support of the law of the country. The *merits* of "*Cain*" being thus blazed abroad, where one copy had been sold before, hundreds were now dispersed, as the public were supplied with them *dog-cheap*. Lord Byron, soon after, wrote a letter to Mr. Murray, in which he avowed that "*Cain*" was published contrary to Mr. Murray's opinion, and that, as his own pertinacity had occasioned all the outcry, he was ready, and, if necessary, would come to England, to take all the consequences upon himself, in *propriâ personâ*. Here the matter ended, at least ought, in all Christian charity, to have ended; but lately (*since the death of Lord Byron*) the Rev. John Styles, D.D., a London preacher, at Holland Chapel, Kennington, has thought proper to revive the subject, by an attack on all his Lordship's works, and on the drama of "*Cain*" in particular, which he denounces as alike injurious to religion and morality. Not content with preaching against them in his pulpit, he has printed his discourse, and thus entered the lists as an *author*,* and as

* Lord Byron's Works, viewed in Connexion with Christianity, and the Obligations of Social Life; a Sermon delivered in Holland Chapel, Kennington, July 4, 1824, by the Rev. Jno.

such, we shall take the liberty, as his Lordship is no more, to make some sort of reply for him. Lord Byron is gone to his account before a merciful, and, we trust, forgiving Omnipotent; and, although it should seem that the *de mortuis nil nisi bonum* is held by the reverend divine to be a heathenish and not a Christian doctrine, yet he ought not to have forgotten that the founder of his own religion lays down as a fundamental position, "*Judge not, lest ye be judged.*" If the propriety of metaphysical subjects (particularly those where the Deity is personified, and human ideas are put into the mouth of the Omniscient) be questionable objects of poetical discussion, it is unquestionable that the *pulpit* is not a proper rostrum for *reviewers*, and *sermons* proper vehicles of *literary criticism*, and *coarse* attacks upon individuals. All moral men hold it to be the business of a clergyman simply to expound the Word of God; to enforce the precepts of religion, and to animate his fellow-Christians in the pursuit of moral duty; he is not to level his rebukes at persons for what he may consider as an aberration from strict propriety of conduct; such a practice would convert a sacred place of worship into a hotbed of angry passions and mutual animosities. Still less ought a preacher

Jno. Styles, D.D. (Knight and Lacy, publishers, Paternoster Row.)

The work is also (we have been informed) sold by the *pew-openers*, at the *chapel door!* An eye to business!!

to fulminate, *ex cathedrâ*, petulant censures upon literary effusions; that degrades the spiritual *divine* to a *pedagogical controversialist*. "*Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*" Stick to your text, Master Parson!

Every schoolboy has read Æsop's fable of the *Ass* kicking at the *Sick Lion*, and could not refrain from laughing at the low cunning of the dastardly insult; but to kick at a *dead lion* (my good reverend sir!) must excite the contempt and indignation of every follower of the meek, humble, patient, and forgiving Jesus Christ. It is well for some asses that the *lion is dead*, or the rage which mangled the "*Scotch Reviewers and English Bards*," might not have spared even the black frock of a "*reverend hooded one!*"

CHAPTER III.

Lord Byron engages in another literary Controversy with Mr. Southey, the Poet Laureat.—Mr. Southey attacks Lord B. in his preface to a poem, "The Vision of Judgment."—Lord B. replies in an appendix to "Marino Faliero."—Mr. Southey rejoins in the newspapers, and Lord Byron sur-rejoins in a periodical publication, "The Liberal."—Mr. Southey's poem, "The Vision of Judgment," and Lord Byron's Parody on it, also called "The Vision of Judgment."—The publisher of the latter indicted for a Libel, and found guilty.—Sentence on him.—A word to the wise, to Mr. Southey, if he will take it.

Lord Byron had now to enter again the controversial arena against a new antagonist, who impugned not only his own moral character, and that of his writings, but included also in the charge some of his most intimate friends and dearest connexions. Mr. Southey had always felt considerably sore at his Lordship's irreverent mention of him in his "*Scotch Reviewers and English Bards*," and this feeling was further irritated when Lord Byron (in his dispute with Mr. Bowles respecting Pope) had another fling at Mr. Southey's "*invariable principles*," alluding to his change of sentiments, now that he was become *Poet-Laureat*, from what he entertained previously, when he wrote

"*Wat Tyler*," &c. &c. Mr. Southey at length thought it incumbent upon him to repel these aggressions, and in the preface to his work, entitled "*The Vision of Judgment*," he inveighs most bitterly against literary prostitution, and its demoralizing effects, to the following purport: "For more than half a century English literature has been distinguished by its moral purity; the effect, and in its turn, the cause of an improvement in national manners. A father might, without apprehension of evil, have put into the hands of his children any book which issued from the press, if it did not bear either in its title-page or frontispiece manifest signs that it was intended as furniture for the brothel. There was no danger in any work which bore the name of a respectable publisher, or was to be procured at any respectable bookseller's. This was particularly the case with regard to our poetry. It was now no longer so; and woe to those by whom the offence cometh!"

Having thus laid his charge generally, Mr. Southey makes it fall obliquely; but so that the allusion should be sure not to be mistaken, on the head of Lord Byron, whom he designates as the "*Coryphæus* of the *Satanic school*," all the members of which he resembles to the infidel writers of France, who occasioned all the horrors of the late Revolution. This was evidently a new edition of the old Anti-Jacobin hue and cry, and an attempt to make his own *private* dispute a *public* affair, by

lugging in all religious and moral men, and all lovers of order, to join in an outcry in defence of Church, King, and State, and (which was of infinitely more importance than all these put together) of—Mr. SOUTHEY himself!! "*Ego et Rex meus*," &c. In the appendix to the tragedy of the "*Two Foscari*," Lord Byron replies, and repels these charges (together with some others of a different nature) in the following terms:

"In Lady Morgan's fearless and excellent work upon "*Italy*," I perceive the expression of 'Rome of the Ocean' applied to Venice. The same phrase occurs in the "*Two Foscari*." My publisher can vouch for me that the tragedy was written and sent to England some time before I had seen Lady Morgan's work, which I only received on the 16th of August. I hasten, however, to notice the coincidence, and to yield the originality of the phrase to her who first placed it before the public. I am the more anxious to do this, as I am informed (for I have seen but few of the specimens, and those accidentally) that there have been lately brought against me charges of plagiarism. I have also had an anonymous sort of threatening intimation of the same kind, apparently with the intent of extorting money. To such charges I have no answer to make. One of them is ludicrous enough. I am reproached for having formed the description of a shipwreck in verse from the narratives of many *actual* shipwrecks

in *prose*, selecting such materials as were most striking. Gibbon makes it a merit in Tasso 'to have copied the minutest details of the Siege of Jerusalem from the Chronicles.' In *me* it may be a demerit, I presume; let it remain so. Whilst I have been occupied in defending *Pope's* character, the lower orders of Grub-street appear to have been assailing *mine*: this is as it should be, both in them and in me. One of the accusations in the nameless epistle alluded to is still more laughable: it states seriously that I 'received five hundred pounds for writing advertisements for Day and Martin's patent blacking!' This is the highest compliment to my literary powers which I ever received. It also states 'that a person has been trying to make acquaintance with Mr. Townsend, a gentleman of the law, who was with me in Venice on business, three years ago, for the purpose of obtaining any defamatory particulars of my life from this occasional visitor.' Mr. Townsend is welcome to say what he knows. I mention these particulars merely to show the world in general what the *literary* lower world contains, and their way of setting to work. Another charge made, I am told, in the "*Literary Gazette*," is, that I wrote the notes to "*Queen Mab*;" a work which I never saw till some time after its publication, and which I recollect showing to Mr. Sotheby, as a work of great power and imagination. I never wrote a line of the notes, nor ever saw them ex-

cept in their published form. No one knows better than their real author, that his opinions and mine differ materially upon the metaphysical portion of that work; though in common with all who are not blinded by baseness and bigotry, I highly admire the poetry of that and his other publications.

" Mr. Southey, too, in his pious preface to a poem, whose blasphemy is as harmless as the sedition of " *Wat Tyler*," because it is equally absurd with that sincere production, calls upon the ' legislature to look to it,' as the toleration of such writings led to the French Revolution: *not* such writings as ' *Wat Tyler*,' but as those of the ' Satanic school.' This is not true, and Mr. Southey knows it to be not true. Every French writer of any freedom was persecuted; Voltaire and Rousseau were exiles, Marmontel and Diderot were sent to the Bastile, and a perpetual war was waged with the whole class by the existing despotism. In the next place, the French Revolution was *not* occasioned by any writings whatsoever, but must have occurred had no such writers ever existed. It is the fashion to attribute every thing to the French Revolution, and the French Revolution to every thing but its real cause. That cause is obvious—the Government exacted too much, and the people could neither *give* nor *bear more*. Without this, the Encyclopedists might have written their fingers off without

the occurrence of a single alteration. And the *English* Revolution—(the first I mean)—what was it occasioned by? The *puritans* were surely as pious as Wesley and his biographer? Acts—acts on the part of the Government, and *not* writings against them, have caused the past convulsions, and are tending to the future.

" I look upon such as inevitable, though no revolutionist: I wish to see the English constitution restored and not destroyed. Born an aristocrat, and naturally one by temper, with the greater part of my present property in the funds, what have I to gain by a revolution? Perhaps I have more to lose in every way than Mr. Southey, with all his places and presents for panegyrics, and abuse into the bargain. But that a revolution is inevitable, I repeat. The government may exult over the suppression of petty tumults; these are but the receding waves repulsed and broken for a moment on the shore, while the great tide is still rolling on and gaining ground with every breaker. Mr. Southey accuses us of attacking the religion of the country; and is he abetting it by writing lives of *Wesley?* One mode of worship is merely destroyed by another. There never was, nor ever will be, a country without a religion. We shall be told of *France* again: but it was only *Paris* and a frantic party which for a moment upheld their dogmatic nonsense of theo-philanthropy. The Church of England, if overthrown, will be

swept away by the sectarians and not by the sceptics. People are too wise, too well-informed, too certain of their own immense importance in the realms of space, ever to submit to the impiety of doubt. There may be a few such diffident speculators, like water in the pale sunbeam of human reason, but they are very few; and their opinions, without enthusiasm or appeal to the passions, can never gain proselytes; unless, indeed, they were persecuted; *that*, to be sure, will increase any thing.

"Mr. S., with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated "death-bed repentance" of the objects of his dislike, and indulges himself in a pleasant "*Vision of Judgment*," in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. What Mr. S.'s sensations or ours may be in the awful moment of leaving this state of existence, neither he nor we can pretend to decide. In common, I presume, with most men of any reflection, I have not waited for a "death-bed" to repent of many of my actions, notwithstanding the "diabolical deeds" which this pitiful *renegado* in his rancour would impute to those who scorn *him*. Whether upon the whole the good or evil of my deeds may preponderate is not for me to ascertain; but as my means and opportunities have been greater, I shall limit my present defence to an assertion (easily proved, if necessary,) that I, "in my degree," have done more real good in any one given

year, since I was twenty, than Mr. Southey in the whole course of his *shifting* and *turncoat* existence. There are several actions to which I can look back with an honest pride, not to be damped by the calumnies of a hireling. There are others to which I recur with sorrow and repentance; but the only *act* of *my* life of which Mr. Southey can have any real knowledge, as it was one which brought me in contact with a near connexion of his own, did no dishonour to that connexion nor to me.

"I am not ignorant of Mr. Southey's calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad on his return from Switzerland against me and others: they have done him no good in this world; and, if his creed be the right one, they will do him less in the next. What *his* "death-bed" may be, it is not my province to predicate: let him settle it with his Maker, as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in this arrogant scribbler of all work, sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow-creatures, with "*Wat Tyler*," the "*Apotheosis of George the Third*," and the "*Elegy on Martin*" the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk. One of his consolations appears to be a Latin note from a work of *Mr. Landor*,* the author of

* In a note on the poem of "*The Island*," allusion is made to the "*Gebir*" of Mr. Landor.—"The poem (says Lord Byron) I never

'*Gebir*,' whose friendship for Robert Southey will, it seems, "be an honour to him when the ephemeral disputes and ephemeral reputations of the day are forgotten." I for one neither envy him "the friendship," nor the glory, in reversion, which is to accrue from it, like Mr. Thellusson's fortune in the third and fourth generation. This friendship will probably be as memorable as his own epics, which (as I quoted to him ten or twelve years ago in '*English Bards*') Porson said, 'would be remembered when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, and not till then.' For the present, I leave him."

To this reply of Lord Byron, Mr. Southey rejoins by the following letter, published in one of the newspapers;

"SIR:—Having seen in the newspapers a note relating to myself, extracted from a recent publication of Lord Byron's, I request permission to reply, through the medium of your journal.

"I come at once to his Lordship's charge against me, blowing away the abuse with which it is frothed, and evaporating a strong acid in

I never read, but have heard the lines quoted by a more recondite reader, who seems to be of a different opinion from the Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, who qualified it, in his answer to the Critical Reviewer of his Juvenal, as trash of the worst and most insane description." It is to Mr. Landor, the author of "*Gebir*," so qualified, and of some Latin poems, which vie with Martial or Catullus in obscenity, that the immaculate Mr. Southey addresses his declamation against impurity!

which it is suspended. The residuum then appears to be, that 'Mr. Southey, on his return from Switzerland (in 1817) scattered abroad calumnies, knowing them to be such, against Lord Byron and others.' To this I reply with *a direct and positive denial.*

"If I had been told in that country that Lord Byron had turned Turk, or monk of La Trappe, that he had furnished a *harem*, or endowed a hospital, I might have thought the account, whichever it had been, possible, and repeated it accordingly; passing it, as it had been taken, in the small change of conversation, for no more than it was worth. In this manner I might have spoken of him, as of Baron Geramb, the Green Man, the Indian Jugglers, or any other *figurante* of the time being. There was no reason for particular delicacy on my part, in speaking of his Lordship; and, indeed, I should have thought any thing which might be reported of him, would have injured his character as little as the story which so greatly annoyed Lord Keeper Guildford—that he had ridden a rhinoceros. He may ride a rhinoceros, and though every body would stare, no one would wonder. But, making no inquiry concerning him when I was abroad, because I felt no curiosity, I heard nothing, and had nothing to repeat. When I spoke of wonders to my friends and acquaintance on my return, it was of the flying tree at Alpacht, and the 11,000 virgins at

Cologne—not of Lord Byron. I sought for no staler subject than St. Ursula.

"Once, and once only, in connexion with Switzerland, I have alluded to his Lordship; and, as the passage was curtailed in the press, I take this opportunity of restoring it. In the *Quarterly Review*, speaking incidentally of the Jungfrau, I said—'It was the scene where Lord Byron's *Manfred* met the devil and bullied him; though the devil must have won his cause before any tribunal in this world or the next, if he had not pleaded more feebly for himself than his advocate, in a cause of canonization, ever pleaded for him.'

"With regard to the 'others,' whom his Lordship accuses me of calumniating, I suppose he alludes to a party of his friends, whose names I found written in the album, at Mont Auvert, with an avowal of atheism * annexed, in Greek, and

* The affair, against which Mr. Southey would have anathema thundered out by all mankind, was nothing more than a joke. Lord Byron was accompanied by Mr. P. B. Shelley and some other gentlemen on this visit to the monks at St. Auvert, and the *Album* was presented as usual, that each might, if he pleased, insert some remembrance of his having visited the spot. Mr. Shelley, in ridicule of the ignorance of these Holy Fathers, which was perceptible enough, added to his own signature the Greek word Αθεος (atheos). The meaning of the word was inexplicable to the learned monks, and the joke was only discovered by some subsequent traveller (Mr. Southey himself), who put a harsher construction on so trivial a matter than the occasion demanded. But an angry man will make use of any weapon.

an indignant comment, in the same language, underneath it. Those names, with that avowal and the comment, I transcribed in my note-book, and spoke of the circumstance on my return. If I had published it, the gentleman in question would not have thought himself slandered, by having that recorded of him which he has so often recorded of himself.

" The many opprobious appellations which Lord Byron has bestowed upon me, I leave as I find them, with the praises which he has bestowed upon himself.

> ' How easily is a noble spirit discern'd
> From harsh and sulphurous matter, that flies out
> In contumelies, makes a noise, and stinks !'
>
> *B. Jonson.*

" But I am accustomed to such things; and so far from irritating me are the enemies who use such weapons, that when I hear of their attacks, it is some satisfaction to think they have thus employed the malignity which must have been employed elsewhere, and could not have been directed against any person whom it could possibly molest or injure less. The viper, however venemous in purpose, is harmless in effect, while it is biting at the file. It is seldom, indeed, that I waste a word, or a thought, upon those who are perpetually assailing me. But abhorring as I do the personalities which disgrace our current literature, and averse from controversy as I

am, both by principle and inclination, I make no profession of non-resistance: when the offence, and the offender, are such as to call for the whip and the branding-iron, it has been both seen and felt that I can inflict them.

"Lord Byron's present exacerbation is evidently produced by an infliction of this kind, not by hearsay reports of my conversation, four years ago, transmitted him from England. The cause may be found in certain remarks upon the Satanic school of poetry, contained in my Preface to the '*Vision of Judgment.*' Well would it be for Lord Byron, if he could look back on any of his writings with as much satisfaction as I shall always do upon what is there said of that flagitious school. Many persons, and parents especially, have expressed their gratitude to me for having applied the branding-iron where it was so richly deserved. The Edinburgh Reviewer, indeed, with that honourable feeling by which his criticisms are so peculiarly distinguished, suppressing the remarks themselves, has imputed them wholly to envy on my part. I give him, in this instance, full credit for sincerity. I believe he was equally incapable of comprehending a worthier motive, or of inventing a worse; and as I have never condescended to expose, in any instance, the pitiful malevolence, I thank him for having, in this, stript it bare himself, and exhibited it in its bald, naked, and undisguised deformity.

" Lord Byron, like his encomiast, has not ventured to bring the matter of those animadversions into view. He conceals the fact, that they are directed against the authors of blasphemous and lascivious books; against men, who, not content with indulging their own vices, labour to make others the slaves of sensuality like themselves; against public panders, who, mingling impiety with lewdness, seek at once to destroy the cement of social order, and to carry profanation and pollution into private families and into the hearts of individuals.

" His Lordship has thought it not unbecoming in him to call me 'a scribbler of all work.' Let the word *scribbler* pass; it is not an appellation which will stick, like that of the *Satanic school.* But if a scribbler, how am I one of *all work?* I will tell Lord Byron what I have *not* scribbled; what kind of work I have *not* done. I have never published libels upon my friends and acquaintances, expressed my sorrow for those libels, and called them in during a mood of better mind, and then re-issued them when the evil spirit, which for a time has been cast out, had returned and taken possession, with seven others, more wicked than himself. I have never abused the powers of which every author is in some degree possessed, to wound the character of a man, or the heart of a woman. I have never sent into the world a book to which I did not dare affix my name; or

which I feared to claim in a court of justice, if it were printed by a knavish bookseller. I have never manufactured furniture for the brothel! None of *these things* have I done; none of the foul work by which literature is perverted to the injury of mankind. My hands are clean; there is no 'damned spot' upon them; no taint, which 'all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten.'

"Of the work which I *have* done, it becomes me not here to speak, save only as relates to the Satanic school, and its Coryphœus, the author of '*Don Juan.*' I have held up that school to public detestation, as enemies to the religion, the institutions, and the domestic morals of their country. I have given them a designation *to which their founder and leader* ANSWERS. I have sent a stone from my sling, which has smitten their Goliah in the forehead. I have fastened his name upon the gibbet, for reproach and ignominy, as long as it shall endure: take it down who can!

"One word of advice to Lord Byron before I conclude. When he attacks me again, let it be in rhyme: for one who has so little command of himself, it will be a great advantage that his temper should be obliged to *keep tune;* and while he may still indulge in the same rankness and virulence of insult, the metre will, in some degree, seem to lessen its vulgarity.

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

"*Keswick, 5th January.*"

By way of a *coup de grâce* the following descriptive sketch of character is drawn in the fourth number of the "*Liberal*:"—"Deserters are never implicitly trusted. There is, besides the sentiment or general principle of the thing, a practical reason for this. Their zeal, their eagerness to distinguish themselves in their new career, makes them rash and extravagant; and not only so, but there is always a leaven of their old principles remaining behind, which breaks out in spite of themselves, and which it is difficult for their encouragers and patrons to guard against. This was remarkably the case with the late Mr. Windham. He was constantly *running amuck* at some question or other, and committing the ministers. His old, free-thinking, opposition habits returned upon him before he was aware of it; and he was sure to hazard some paradox, or stickle for some objectionable point, contrary to the forms of office. The cabinet had contemplated no such thing. He was accordingly kept in check, and alarmed the Treasury Bench whenever he rose. He was like a dog that giveth mouth before his time, or is continually running on a wrong scent; he was chid and fed! The same thing is observable in the present *Poet Laureate*, whose jacobinical principles have taken such deep root in him (*intus et in cute*), that they break out even in his court-poems, like a 'thick scurf' on loyalty; and he presents them unconsciously, as an offering of

'sweet-smelling gums,' at the very foot of the throne. He at present retains his place apparently on condition of holding his tongue. He writes such Odes on Kings, that it is next to impossible not to travestie them into lampoons!

"The remarks I have made above apply strongly to him and some of his associates of the *Lake School.* I fancy he has felt, as much as any one, the inconvenience of drawing off from a cause, and that by so doing we leave our oldest and our best friends behind. There are those among the favourers and admirers of his youth, whom his dim eyes discover not, and who do not count his grey hairs. Not one or two, but more—men of character and understanding, who had pledged mutual faith, and drunk the cup of freedom with him warm from the wine-press, as well as the 'dews of Castalie.' He gave up a principle, and one left him; he insulted a feeling, and another fled; he accepted a place, and received the congratulations of no one but Mr. Croker. He looks round for them in vain, with throbbing heart (the heart of a poet can never lie still; he should take the more care what it is that agitates it!) sees only the shadows or the carcases of old friendships; or stretches out his hand to grasp some new patron, and finds that also cold. If our friends are sometimes accused of short memories, our enemies make it up by having long ones." We had better adhere to the first; for we must

despair of making cordial converts of the last. This double desolation is cheerless, and makes a man bethink himself. We may make a shift (a shabby one) without our self-respect, but it will never do to have it followed by the loss of the respect of those whose opinion we once valued most. We may tamper with our own consciences; but we feel at a loss without the testimony of others in our favour; which is seldom paid, except to integrity of purpose and principle. Perhaps, however, Mr. Southey consoles himself for a certain void without and within, by receiving the compliments of some under graduate of either of our universities, on his last article in defence of rotten boroughs, in the *Quarterly Review;* or of a dignitary of the church, on his share in the Six Acts, and for suggesting to Lord Sidmouth the propriety of punishing the second conviction for libel with banishment. We do not know how this may be: but with us it would barb the dart!"

Thus do the great Literary "Wonders of the World" deal in personal abuse and invectives, and—

"*Quidquid in totâ nascitur Anticyrâ.*"—!!

OVID.

Having thus fairly pitted the two "*game cocks,*" and detailed the fight, so far as it was carried on in dull, rumbling, cart-like prose, it will be necessary (as *sauce piquante* to so unpalatable a dish) to

take notice of Dr. Southey's poetical* work, entitled "*The Vision of Judgment*," as it drew down upon his unfortunate head another "*Vision of Judgment*," by Lord Byron, of a very different stamp. There never was a harder task imposed upon a man than that of giving a character to that which has no character at all. Such is Mr. Southey's work, which strongly indicates a deplorable decay of mental faculties, prognosticating dotage. In the first place, it is a stupid, fulsome, nauseous tissue of flattery on kings, ministers, Mr. Southey himself, and the admirers of so great a man; and a denunciation of all those *impious* writers who have dared to ridicule the no-poetry of the Poet-Laureate; and, in the second place, it is puffed out as a grand, *original* experiment (though, by the bye, the experiment is as old as Queen Bess, and older too) of making English verse according to the Latin prosody of long and short syllables, without any attention to rhyme, and, according to Mr. Southey's *new* experiment, to reason or sense! It is evident, from the arguments he uses in favour of his attempt, that he is ignorant of the constructive principles of the languages in which he assumes to take the lead of others, as any classical, or even

* Poetical is rather a false epithet, a misnomer, as the reader will presently have occasion to see;—unless, indeed,—

> "That poetry, a man may call
> Stuff, that's no poetry at all."

mere English scholar, will instantly perceive from a perusal of the work itself. It opens with

1. " THE TRANCE"

into which the author falls, on hearing the bell toll for the death of the late king, George the Third, and which he thus elegantly describes in his new old English style :

" And therewithall I felt a stroke as of lightning,
With a sound like the rushing of winds, or the roaring of waters.
If from without it came I knew not, so sudden the seizure;
Or if the brain itself in that strong flash had expended
All its electric stores. Of strength and thought it bereft me;
Hearing and sight, and sense, were gone; and when I awaken'd,
'Twas from a dream of death, in silence and uttermost darkness,
Knowing not where or how, nor if I was wrapt in the body,
Nor if entranced or dead."

" *Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?* " Next, " Ladies and Gentlemen, you shall see "— We hope the reader will pardon our rudeness, but, after the above precious specimen of *standard* writing, who, but a cynic could refrain from open-mouthed laughter? But to bring us back to due solemnity the author introduces us into

2. " THE VAULT."

The author is comforted, and begins to survey his new quarters; and sees coffins, velvet, gold fringe, embroidery, palls, urns, blazonry, &c. &c.; hears music, which, as in the concluding scene of

"*Tom Thumb,*" instantly brings all the dead to life, and up they jump. This leads to

3. "THE AWAKENING."

The author spies the King under a cloud, who begins to say his prayers, till interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Perceval! The King asks the news, how the "*hope of the family*" behaved, and whether the people were contented and quiet? Perceval gives courtly answers to all questions but the last, on which head he expresses his fears that some mischief is brewing, as he sees (not WAT TYLER, who was become a sinecurist, perhaps, but) the ghosts of *Robespierre*, *Danton*, and *Co.*, in consultation with those of *Despard* and *Guy Faux!*

"Whether France or Britain be threatened,
Soon will the issue show; or, if both at once are endangered:
For with the ghosts obscene of Robespierre, Danton, and Hebert,
Faux and Despard I saw!"

Another flight brings the author to

4. "THE GATE OF HEAVEN,"

which, from St. Augustin's "*De civitate Dei,*" we see decked out with towers, cupolas, gold, pyropus, diamonds coruscant, adamant, &c.; and an angel (the Crier of the Court).

"Ho!" he exclaim'd, "King George of England cometh to judgment!
Hear Heaven! Ye Angels, hear! souls of the good and wicked,
Whom it concerns, attend!"

Now come

5. " THE ACCUSERS,"

The *Spirit of Sedition*, *Jack Wilkes*, and *Junius*, who are dumb-founded, and swept off the stage by the *scene-shifter*, to make way for

6. " THE ABSOLVERS,"

who are also abashed, all but " *General Washington*," who absolves the King. (Is Mr. Southey a papist, that he deals in *absolution?*—if so, pray to mercy that somebody may absolve him for his folly!) After Priest Washington's absolution, the King, of course, receives

7. " THE BEATIFICATION,"

but if he returned thanks for it in the words that Mr. Southey puts into his mouth, he little deserved it; he then becomes rejuvenescent, and is introduced to

8. " THE SOVEREIGNS,"

King William, King Charles, Queen Elizabeth, Kings Edward, Richard I., and Alfred (a queer chronological classification!). These royal phantoms are *shown off* in strains borrowed seemingly from the exhibitors of the wax-work figures in Westminster Abbey, or those other more eloquent members of society, the puppet-show folks. The new-comer is then welcomed by

9. " THE ELDER WORTHIES,"

Bede, Bacon, Wickliffe, Chaucer, Cranmer, Cecil,

Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Taylor, Marlborough, Newton, and Berkeley. These make way for

10. " THE WORTHIES OF THE GEORGIAN AGE,"

Wolfe, Cook, Handel, Reynolds, Hogarth, Wesley, Lord Mansfield, Burke, Hastings, Cowper, and Nelson. Next in order of procession arrive

11. " THE YOUNG SPIRITS,"

at the head of whom he places *Chatterton!* and lastly, gives us

12. " THE MEETING:"

in which the King rejoins his grand-daughter, the late Princess Charlotte of Wales, his royal spouse, his daughter Amelia (not a syllable about the late queen, his daughter-in-law! She, perhaps, was *tabooed* in heaven as well as on earth!) The Poet Laureate, too, in the throng, and bustle, and joy of merry-meeting, had the impudence to attempt to thrust his nose into royal company,

> " I, too, press'd forward to enter;—
> But the weight of body withheld me."

No wonder, it was all *lead*, like his poetry;

> " I fell, precipitate. Starting,
> Then I awoke, and beheld the mountains in twilight before me,
> Dark and distinct; and instead of the rapturous sound of hosannahs,
> Heard the bell of the tower—toll!—toll!"—

It is a pity he ever awoke out of his doldrum;

at least such was the opinion of his royal master, who was so disgusted with this specimen of Bartholomew fair slang, that he ordered the Laureate to "hang up his fiddle" in future, as he was only fit to play at brawls, hops, wakes, or fairs, to the bumpkins and blowzalinds of "*Keswick.*"

Now, reader, was it possible for a man of genius, spirit, and genuine humour—was it possible for Lord Byron, seeing himself, his friends, and their writings so virulently attacked, in the preface to such a Grub-street farrago of nonsense, to refrain from taking aim at so fair a mark? I see their joyful looks, as they read the precious production, and hear them as they

"*Ingeminant tremulos naso crispante cachinnos.*"

In the twinkling of an eye out came "*The Vision of Judgment*, by Quevedo Redivivus, suggested by the composition so entitled by the author of '*Wat Tyler.*'"

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."

*Preface.**

"It hath been wisely said, that 'one fool

* In the preface to the second volume of "*The Liberal*," the public are informed, that had the preface (to Lord Byron's Vision of Judgment), entrusted to Mr. Murray, been sent to the new publisher, as it ought to have been, much of the unintended part of the effect produced upon weak minds, would have been explained away at once.

makes many;' and it hath been poetically observed,

'That fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'

POPE.

"If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegado intolerance, and impious cant of the poem, by the author of '*Wat Tyler*,' are something so stupendous, as to form the sublime of himself, containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

"So much for his poem: a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed '*Satanic school*,' the which he doth recommend to the notice of the Legislature, thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an *informer*. If there exists any where, excepting in his imagination, such a school, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have 'talked of *him*, for they laughed consumedly.'

"I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert that they, in their individual capacities, have done more

good in the charities of life to their fellow-creatures in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

"Firstly. Is Mr. Southey the author of '*Wat Tyler?*'

"Secondly. Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

"Thirdly. Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full Parliament, a rancorous renegado?

"Fourthly. Is he not Poet-Laureate, with his own lines on Martin, the regicide, staring him in the face?

"And fifthly. Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare *he* call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

"I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less, than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the "*Anti-Jacobin*," by his present patrons. Hence all this 'skimble-skamble stuff' about 'Satanic' and so forth. However, it is worthy of him.—'*Qualis ab incepto.*'

"If there is any thing obnoxious to the politi-

cal opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written every thing else, for aught that the writer cared, —had they been upon another subject; but to attempt to canonize a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France,—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new "*Vision*," his *public* career will not be more favourably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation), there can be no doubt.

"With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them, than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerably. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

"QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

"P.S. It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom

with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this "*Vision.*" But for precedents upon such points I must refer him to Fielding's "*Journey from this World to the next,*" and to the visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish, or translated. The reader is also requested to observe that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not like "a school divine," but like the un-scholar-like Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer's "Wife of Bath," Pulci's "Morgante Maggiore," Swift's "Tale of a Tub," and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, &c. may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

"Q. R.

"*** Mr. Southey being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will, in the mean time, have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called, otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously 'one Mr. Landor,' who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the Poet Laureate dedicated to

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him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called '*Gebir.*' Who would suppose, that, in the same Gebir, the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend, Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign:—

"(Prince Gebir having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view, and he exclaims to his ghostly guide)—

" A roar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
Is that with eye-brows white and slanting brow?
Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine hung.
He too amongst my ancestors! I hate
The despot, but the dastard I despise.
Was he our countryman?"
" Alas, O King!
Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east."
" He was a warrior then, nor fear'd the gods!"
" Gebir, he fear'd the Demons, not the Gods,
Though them indeed his daily face ador'd;
And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
Squander'd, as stones, to exercise a sling!
And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—
Oh madness of mankind! address'd, ador'd!"

Gebir, p. 28.

" I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of

Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat discreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of 'great moral lessons' are apt to be found in strange company."

The "*Vision of Quevedo*" opens with—

"Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the gallic era "eighty-eight,"
The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And a pull altogether, as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way."

After a burlesque description of the employment of the angels and guardian seraphs, the author proceeds to relate that, as St. Peter nods over his keys, he is aroused by a noise, and sees a cherub, who informs him that "*George the Third is dead!*" The angelic "caravan" arrives with the soul of the deceased, and seats it on a cloud. The gates of heaven open, and the archangel Michael issues forth with the seraphic host. Satan appears too, to make his claim, which he does in proper form; but being rather prolix, as is the case with most of the gentlemen of the "*black gown,*" is called to order by St. Michael, and told to call his witnesses. Satan gives a signal, and a tumult is heard, as of "hell broke loose:"—

"Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
Who d—d away his eyes as heretofore;
There Paddy brogued "by J—s!"—"what's your wull?"
The temperate Scot exclaim'd: the French ghost swore
In certain terms I shan't translate in full,
As the first coachmen will; and 'midst the war
The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
"*Our* President is going to war, I guess."

"Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane,
In short, an universal shoal of shades
From Otaheite's Isle to Salisbury Plain,
Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades;
All summon'd by this grand 'subpœna,' to
Try if kings mayn't be d—d, like me or you."

Michael turns pale at sight of so numerous a host, and tells Satan that two honest witnesses will do his business; Satan seemingly acquiesces—

"Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd 'multifaced'
By multo-scribbling Southey). 'Then we'll call
One or two persons of the myriads placed
Around our congress, and dispense with all
The rest,' quoth Michael: 'Who may be so graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
It be?' Then Satan answered—'There are many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any.'

"A merry, cock-eyed, curious looking sprite" appears; but Jack turns "*King's evidence*," and the devil abuses him for his apostacy, and calls Junius. The "shadow of a shade" comes forth,

a very Proteus, who assumes all forms—now Burke, now Tooke, now Sir Philip Francis. The shade challenges the king to answer his letter, perseveres in the truth of his charges, and then old "*Nominis Umbra*" vanishes. Satan then desires that George Washington, John Horne Tooke, and Franklin may not be forgot. But at this instant a hubbub ensues, and the devil Asmodeus arrives, puffing and blowing, with a "*renegado*" burden, a "writer of libel on History and Bible;" with some of his works chained about his neck. Satan recognizes the renegado, and tells Asmodeus he needed not have been in so much hurry, as they were sure enough of his cargo. Michael decrees to give the bard a hearing:—

"Now the Bard, glad to get an audience, which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

"But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd
Into recitative, in great dismay
Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long array;
And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his founder'd verses under way,
And cried, 'For God's sake stop, my friend! 'twere best—
'*Non Di, non homines*—' you know the rest."

The tumult grows universal; some cough, some cry "Off, off!" and St. Michael is obliged to blow his trumpet to drown the clamour. The bard resumes his self-defence, or rather self-praise, and proudly enumerates the works he had written—Wat Tyler, Rhymes on Blenheim, Waterloo; he had written in praise of regicides, of kings, for republics and against them, for pantisocrasy and turned Anti-Jacobin, had turned his coat, and would have turned his skin. He had sung against battles, and hymned in their praise and glory; he had called reviewing the "ungentle craft," and became as base a critic as ever crawl'd; he had written blank verse and blanker prose.

"He had written Wesley's life:—here, turning round
To Satan, 'Sir, I'm ready to write your's,
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allures
The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints.'

"Satan bow'd and was silent. 'Well, if you
With amiable modesty decline
My offer, what says Michael? There are few
Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.
Mine is a pen of all work; not so new
As it was once, but I would make you shine
Like your own trumpet; by the way, my own
Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.

"But talking about trumpets, here's my *Vision!*
Now you shall judge all people; yes, you shall
Judge with my *Judgment!*"—&c.

He draws forth a MS., and begins to read, but the devils scamper off, stopping their ears, and plying their pinions, howling and deafened, down to hell. Michael takes his trumpet, but his teeth are so set on edge that he cannot blow. At the fifth line, furious Peter knocks the bard with his keys into the fiery lake, to scrawl some "life" or "vision." Amidst the confusion the King slips into heaven—

> "And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
> I left him practising the hundredth psalm."

The sarcastic, biting, cutting, slashing irony of this two-edged satire it was impossible to parry or return. It was, of the kind, the highest effort of human genius, and, to be properly understood and appreciated, must be perused throughout. But, as certain parts of it have been adjudged by the highest authority to be libellous on the memory of his late most excellent majesty, we have most carefully abstained from giving them a wider circulation by a repetition. Instead of passing our own judgment on Lord Byron's "*Vision of Judgment*," we shall give the reader that which passed upon it in the *Court of King's Bench.*

In January 1824,* Mr. John Hunt, the publisher

* This report is given rather out of the order in which it took place in respect of time; but it is inserted here, to prevent its breaking through the connexion of the momentous struggle in Greece, which is the most important and glorious part of Lord Byron's life.

of some of Lord Byron's later works, and the proprietor of the "*Liberal*," a periodical publication in which his Lordship's "*Vision of Judgment*" first made its appearance, was indicted for an alleged libel on his late majesty. Mr. Adolphus stated the case for the prosecution. "The jury (he said) were aware that his late Majesty, King George the Third, died in the year 1820, after a war of unexampled length had been recently concluded. Before his death, and for some years previous, the hand of heaven had laid heavily upon him; he was full of sufferings and infirmities; he had been deprived of his faculties, he was old, was blind—he had been deprived of the use of that understanding which had been so long an ornament to his country, and a benefit to his subjects. Such was the calamitous state of his late Majesty, when the hand of death put a period to his earthly sufferings. For a considerable time after the accession of the late king, the current of public affairs took a direction which brought many attacks on his person and on his private affairs; but, as the personal virtues of his Majesty became known, as the clouds that had been raised began to dissipate, his enemies were obliged to change their ground; his personal feelings were respected as his virtues were admired. The publication in question was commenced early in the year 1822; it was brought out under the title of "*The Liberal; Verse and Prose, from the South.*"

It assumed a popular title—a name calculated to conciliate the favour of every individual whose feelings were supposed to run in the right course. The libel he complained of was put forth in the shape of a poem, called "*The Vision of Judgment.*" In that poem the author assumes and represents himself to be at the gates of heaven, and the transactions he pretends to have witnessed there he describes with a degree of levity and of impiety which was really astonishing; he fancied himself almost in the presence of his Creator, and he assumed a tone fit only for a pot-house revel, and which would certainly disgrace the company of any gentleman."

The learned gentleman then proceeded to animadvert upon particular passages of the poem,* which he read to the court. After reading them, the learned gentleman proceeded to say, that he thought the jury could not have the smallest doubt of the publication being a gross libel.

Mr. Scarlett, in a most eloquent speech, contended that, every one had a right to publish what he pleased of a deceased king, in the genuine

* It is worthy of remark that all the newspapers gave these passages at full length, and thereby circulated a work that was comparatively but in the hands of a few persons, and which soon after died a natural death, to the very remotest parts of the kingdom; and as thousands read the newspapers who cannot afford, or will not lay out the money to purchase a book, so the circulation of the obnoxious passages was increased *ten hundred thousand fold!!!*

spirit of history and criticism. He regretted his inability to give adequate expression to the strong feelings which he entertained on the subject of this prosecution. He declared most conscientiously, that he never before happened to be engaged in a cause in which he felt that the ground upon which he stood was more delicate; while he was sensible that the attempt to convict the author or publisher of this poem, on the ground of its being a libel on his late Majesty, was most impertinent and ridiculous, and that it ought to be met by no other sentiments on the part of the jury than those of contempt and indignation."

The Chief Justice, addressing the Jury, said "this was an indictment charging the defendant with a libel on his late Majesty, tending to disturb the peace and comfort of his present Majesty, and the other descendants of the late King. He had no hesitation in stating, in point of law, what he believed had not been denied by the learned counsel for the defendant, that a publication calumniating the late King, for the purpose of disturbing the peace and wounding the feelings of his present Majesty, and bringing him into contempt with his subjects, was an offence against the law. It would be for them to say whether the charge in this indictment had been established to their satisfaction. In a charge of this particular nature, they were relieved from the consideration of any general and abstract question, as to how far it was competent

by law to any person, as soon as the grave had closed over a deceased monarch, to speak of him in the way charged in this indictment. The question for them to consider was, first, whether the publication was defamatory of his late Majesty; and, secondly, whether its object was to bring his present Majesty into disgrace and contempt with his subjects. In deciding this question, he trusted they would surrender their judgment to no man, but that they would exercise their own good sense and reason, and pronounce a verdict according to their consciences. The present prosecution, as it appeared, was instituted by one or more private individuals,* and not by any of those persons who were connected with the administration of his Majesty's government. By the law of the country, however, it was open to any individual to become a prosecutor, if he should so think fit, and it was fortunate for the liberties of the country than it was so; for if in this, as in some other countries, none but the officers of the crown could prosecute, too much might be left to the discretion of those officers in the administration of the justice of the country. It had been urged by the counsel for the defendant, that as this publication had not been taken up by any of those who were high in authority, this circumstance

* A self constituted society styling themselves, with modesty enough,—"The Constitutional Society." We suppose they mean thereby—"*Exclusive Patriots.*"

furnished a strong argument against its libellous tendency: how far that argument was entitled to weight, he would leave to their own judgment to determine. The publication was a poem of considerable length, the whole of which the learned counsel for the defence, in the exercise of his discretion, had required to be read. The whole had been read, and he should be wanting in the duty which belonged to his station, if he did not express *his abhorrence at the tone of impiety that pervaded it.* Whether any thing of this nature was to be found in another poem, to which so much allusion had been made, he did not know. It had been supposed that the poem was generally known. He could not say that it was unknown to him by name, and he might even have read some extracts from it in reviews; but he had been brought up in a school of such severe taste, that he felt no desire to read the poem. The learned counsel for the defence had directed their attention to some parts of the poem: there were others to which he had only adverted in general terms. He had contended that the passages in question were to be considered as strictures on the events of the late reign, and not as an attack on the personal character and disposition of his late Majesty." His Lordship read some of the passages. "These passages could not be considered as allusions to events of the late reign, but as a most bitter invective, whether true or false he could

not now inquire, on the personal character of his late Majesty. They had been told that these words were put into the mouths of the Evil One, and that they could not, therefore, be understood as conveying the sentiments of the poet. It would be for them to judge, whether the author meant these passages to be considered as proceeding from the father of lies, or as containing his own sentiments. The admission of his late Majesty into heaven was said to do away the effect of all the reproaches that had been put into the mouth of the spirit of falsehood: this also was a point on which they must exercise their own judgment. If they were satisfied that this publication was defamatory of the late King, they would, in the next place, have to consider whether it was calculated to disturb the peace and comfort of his present Majesty, and his other descendants. Human society was so constituted, that it very rarely happened that the honour or disgrace of a father did not in some degree affect the son: it would seldom happen that the feelings of a son would not be disturbed by reflections on the character of his father. If, therefore, the jury considered this publication as defamatory of the character of his late Majesty, they would scarcely fail to come to the conclusion, that it must have disturbed the peace of the King, and of the other members of his family. If they believed that the publication was of this character, and not a fair

discussion of the events of the late reign, they would then find a verdict of guilty. Let their verdict, however, be decided by their own opinion and their own conscience."

The jury retired at five minutes before two o'clock, and at half past two returned a verdict of *guilty*.

The judgment of the Court (pronounced in Trinity Term following) was, that the defendant, John Hunt, do pay to the King a fine of one hundred pounds, that he enter into sureties for five years, himself in one thousand pounds, and two sureties in five hundred pounds each; aud that he be imprisoned in the custody of the Marshal of the Marshalsea till such fine be paid, and such sureties be given.

His present Majesty might well say, as another Prince said before him—"God deliver me from my friends, and I will defend myself against my enemies." If *Poet Laureate* Southey had not written his "*Vision of Judgment*," Lord Byron could never have parodied it, and the ashes of the late good old King might have slumbered in peace, in the 'tomb of the Capulets,' or rather of the Tudors and Plantagenets. Mr. Southey is a most unlucky bard to royalty; out of place, he pelts it with "*Wat Tylers*;" when in place, he pesters it with "*Visions of Judgment*;" and the latter might, perhaps, have passed unnoticed (as waste paper for the palace), if he had not attacked a

much mightier bard than himself in the preface, and brought trouble upon his royal master, as well as disgrace upon his own laurelled head. "*Verbum sapienti,*"—to Mr. Southey, if he has sense enough to take it! Whatever the parties themselves may think of the matter, all men of sound understanding, of "*mens sana in corpore sano,*" look upon controversial disputes merely as the vanity of coxcombs,* endeavouring to attract all eyes and admiration upon—THEMSELVES!!

* Mr. Southey has just now published a new work, containing a *gentle censure* on the *clergy;* we shall leave the divines to take their own part: Mr. Southey and the Rev. Mr. Styles might not make a bad match together in the wordy war of pompous declamation—

"A tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."—

SHAKESPEARE.

The *Doctor of Laws* has thrown down the gauntlet to the *Doctor in Divinity,* and his last new publication of "*The Book of the Church*" may draw on a battle betwixt those *orthodox game fowls.*

CHAPTER IV.

Lord Byron removes to Pisa.—Meets with friends there.—Attempts to form (in conjunction with them) a Literary Society.—Death of Mr. Shelley.—The commencement of "*The Liberal*," a joint periodical publication of the Society.—Account of Pisa.—Quarrel and final separation between Lord Byron and Mr. Leigh Hunt.—Liberal opinions not countenanced at Pisa.—Fracas between Lord Byron and friends, and some of the Tuscan military.—The Blessings of the Holy Alliance.—Lord Byron removes from Pisa.

Lord Byron now takes up his residence at *Pisa*, where, in conjunction with Mr. Shelley and Mr. Leigh Hunt (the editor and proprietor of the "*Examiner*" newspaper in London, who had come to Italy on Lord Byron's invitation), they formed themselves into a *Literary Society*, whose joint labours issued from the press, under the title of "*The Liberal*," in the first number of which appeared Lord Byron's "*Vision of Judgment*," already noticed. In the Preface, they state that their plan is to contribute their *liberalities* in the shape of poetry, essays, tales, translations, and other amenities, of which kings themselves might read and profit, if they are not afraid of seeing their own faces in every kind of inkstand. Italian literature, in particular, would be a favourite sub-

ject with them; and so was German and Spanish to have been, till they lost the *accomplished scholar and friend,** who was to have shared their task. In the numbers of the "*Liberal*" are a series of "*Letters from Abroad,*" giving accounts of the places where they resided, from which, as written by, or *under the immediate inspection* of Lord Byron, such extracts will be made as may amuse the reader, and give him some idea of his Lordship's mode of passing his time at the various places which he visited.

"Pisa, one of the oldest cities in Europe, and supposed to have originated in a colony from its Grecian namesake, was at one time the most flourishing city in Tuscany. But the sea has deserted it; and with the sea gradually departed all its modern importance. What it retained longest, and up to a late period, was its renown as a place of learning and education. But even that has departed now. It has indeed an university, whose name is loth to abandon it; and the education, to those who are very much in earnest about it, is worth procuring, because private tuition, of a very attentive kind, is to be had for a trifle, and the university lectures may be attended gratui-

* Mr. Shelley, who, before the first number of the *Liberal* could be got ready for the press, was unfortunately *drowned.* He was an accomplished scholar, a good poet, of gentlemanly unassuming manners, an intelligent traveller, a pleasant companion, and a sincere friend.

tously. The science most in request is medicine, or rather surgery. The name of Professor Vaccà (a man in the prime of life, with an intelligent and pleasing countenance) is known all over Europe. There is also another liberality, truly becoming the study of letters, and worth the imitation of countries that pique themselves on their advances beyond superstition: men of any sect or religion can take all the degrees in the university, except those in divinity or the canonical law. One of the most interesting sights now in Pisa is a venerable Greek archbishop, who takes his walk on the Lungarno every evening. It is understood that he is superintending the education of some Greek youths, and that he puts the receipts of his office to the noble purpose of assisting it. *Prince Alexander Mavrocordato*,* who joined his countrymen last year in their great struggle, and to whom Mr. Shelley has dedicated his "*Hellas*," was studying here when his glorious duty called him off.

"What renders Pisa interesting now, and will continue to render it so as long as it exists, is its being left to a comparative solitude, and its containing one of the most singular, and many of the most ancient specimens of the arts in Italy. It now stands five miles from the sea, and so completely out of the ordinary roads of communica-

* The President of the Central Government of Greece.

tion, that the writers of elaborate works upon Italy do not think it incumbent upon them to notice it. Such, however, as have a true taste for their subject, cannot be well satisfied with themselves for the omission. Let the reader imagine a small white city, with a tower, also white, leaning very distinctly in the distance at one end of it, trees on either side, and blue mountains for the back-ground. Such is the first sight of Pisa, as the traveller sees it in coming from Leghorn. Add to this, in summer time, fields of corn on all sides, bordered with hedge-row trees, and the festoons of vines, of which he has so often read, hanging from tree to tree; and he may judge of the impression made upon an enthusiastic admirer of Italy who is in Tuscany for the first time. It looks like a thing you have dreamt of, and answers most completely to the imagination.

" In entering the city the impression is beautiful. What looked white in the distance remains as pure and fair on closer acquaintance. You cross a bridge, and cast your eye up the whole extent of the city one way, the river Arno (the river of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio), winding through the middle of it, under two more bridges, and fair elegant houses of good size bordering the wide pavement on either side. This is the Lung'-arno, or street along the Arno. The mountains, in which you now discover the look of their marble veins (for it is from these that the marble of Car-

rara comes) tower away beautifully at the further end, and seem much nearer than they are. The Arno, which is about as wide, perhaps, as the Isis at Oxford, is sandy-coloured, and in the summer-time shrunken; but still it is the river of the great Tuscan writers, the visible possessor of the name we have all heard a thousand times, and we feel what a true thing is that which is called ideal.

"The first novelty that strikes you, after your dreams and matter-of-fact have recovered from the surprise of their introduction to one another, is the singular fairness and new look of houses that have been standing hundreds of years. This is owing to the Italian atmosphere. Antiquity every where refuses to look ancient; it insists upon retaining its youthfulness of aspect. The consequence at first is a mixed feeling of admiration and disappointment, for we miss the venerable. The houses seem as if they ought to have sympathized more with humanity, and were as cold and hard-hearted as their materials. But you soon find that Italy is the land, not of the venerable, but the beautiful; and cease to look for old age in the chosen country of the Apollo and the Venus. The only real antiquities are those in Dante and the oldest painters, who treat of the Bible in an ancient style. Among the mansions on the Lung'-arno is one entirely fronted with marble, and marble so pure and smooth that you can see your face in it. It is in a most graceful style of archi-

tecture, and has a most curious symbol and motto over the door, which is the second Pisan mystery. The symbol is an actual fetter, attached with great nicety of taste to the middle stone over the doorway: the motto '*Alla Giornata*,' (for 'the day,' or the day's work). The allusion is supposed to be to some captivity undergone by one of the Lanfreducci family, the proprietors, but nobody knows. Further up, on the same side of the way, is the old ducal palace, said to be the scene of the murder of Don Garcia, by his father, which is the subject of one of Alfieri's tragedies: and between both, a little before you come to the old palace, is the mansion still belonging to the family of the Lanfranchi, formerly one of the most powerful in Pisa. Part of the inside is said to have been built by Michael Angelo. The Lanfranchi were among the nobles who conspired to put down the traitorous ascendancy of Count Ugolino, and wreaked that more infamous revenge on him and his young children. I need not remind the reader of the passage in Dante; but perhaps he is not aware that Chaucer has worthily related the story after him, referring, with his usual modesty, for a more sufficing account, to 'the grete poete of Itaille.' See the Monk's Tale, part the last, entitled '*Hugelin of Pise*.' The tower in which Ugolino was starved, was afterwards called the Tower of Famine. Chaucer, who is supposed to have been in Italy, says that it stood 'a littel out' of Pisa; Vil-

lani says, in the piazza of the Anziani. It is understood to be no longer in existence, and even its site is disputed. It is curious to feel one's-self sitting quietly in one of the old Italian houses, and think of all the interests and passions that have agitated the hearts of so many generations of its tenants; all the revels and the quarrels that have echoed along its walls; all the guitars that have tinkled under its windows; all the scuffles that have disputed its doors. Along the great halls, how many feet have hurried in alarm! how many stately beauties have drawn their quiet trains! how many huge torches have ushered magnificence up the staircases! how much blood, perhaps, been shed! The ground-floors of all the great houses in Pisa, as in other Italian cities, have iron bars at the windows, evidently for security in time of trouble. The look is at first very gloomy and prison-like, but you get used to it. The bars, also, are thin, round, and painted white, and the interstices large; and if the windows are towards a garden, and bordered with shrubs and ivy, as in the Casa Lanfranchi, the imagination makes a compromise with their prison-like appearance, and persuades itself they are guards only in time of war, but trellises during a peace establishment. All the floors are made for separate families, it having been the custom in Italy, from time immemorial, for fathers and mothers, sons and daughters-in-law, or *vice versâ*, with as many other relations as might be

'agreeable,' to live under the same roof. Spaciousness and utility were the great objects with the builder; and a stranger is sometimes surprised with the look of the finest houses outside, particularly that of the ground-floor. The stables used often to be there, and their place is now as often occupied by shops. In the inside of the great private houses there is always a certain majestic amplitude; but the entrances of the rooms and the staircase on the ground floor are often placed irregularly, so as to sacrifice every thing to convenience. In the details there is sure to be a noble eye to proportion. You cannot look at the elevation of the commonest door-way, or the ceiling of a room appropriated to the humblest purposes, but you recognize the land of the fine arts. You think Michael Angelo had been at the turning of those arches, at the harmonizing of those beautiful varieties of shape, which, by the secret principles common to all the arts and sciences, affect the mind like a sort of inaudible music. The very plasterer, who is hired to give the bare walls of some old unused apartment an appearance of ornament, paints his doorways, his pilasters, and his borders of leaves, in a bold style of relief and illusion, which would astonish the doubtful hand of many a gentleman 'in the higher walks of art.' It must be observed, however, that this is a piece of good taste which seems to have survived most others, and to have been kept up by the objects upon which it works;

for the arts are at present lying fallow in Italy, waiting for more strenuous times.

" I was so taken up, on my arrival at Pisa, with friends and their better novelties, that I forgot even to look about me for the Leaning Tower. You lose sight of it on entering the town, unless you come in at the Lucca gate. On the Sunday following, however, I went to see it, and the majestic spot in which it stands, with Mr. Shelley.* Good God! what a day that was compared with all that have followed it! I had my friend with me, arm-in-arm, after a separation of years; he was looking better than I had ever seen him; we talked of a thousand things; we anticipated a thousand pleasures.——I must plunge again into my writing, that I may try to forget it.

" I know not whether my first sensation at the sight of the Leaning Tower, was admiration at its extreme beauty, or its threatening attitude. I remember being exceedingly struck with both. Its beauty has never been sufficiently praised. Its overhanging aspect seems to menace the houses near it with instant destruction. The inclination is fourteen feet out of the perpendicular, and has singularly escaped the exaggerations of travellers and pictures. We wonder that people should build houses underneath it, till we recollect that it has probably stood there ever since it was built,

* Whose lamented fate we have before noticed.

that is to say for nearly six hundred and fifty years, and that habit reconciles us to any thing. The structure was begun by a German artist, William of Inspruck, and finished by Italians. Several other towers in Pisa, including the Observatory, have a very visible inclination, owing to the same cause, the sinking of the soil, which is light, sandy, and full of springs; and surely nothing is more probable than an attempt on the part of the builders of so beautiful a structure to counteract the consequences of the foundation's having given way. The tower is a campanile or belfry to the cathedral. It was the custom in Italy to make the belfry a separate building; and the custom was a good one, for it afforded variety, and prevented barbarism. The height of the tower is about one hundred and fifty feet; but it looks more, on account of its happy situation and the lowness of the houses near it. Let the reader imagine the Monument of London sheathed in an open work of eight stories of little columns, and leaning in a fine open situation, and he will have some idea of this noble cylinder of marble. The sheath is its great beauty, and gives it an extraordinary aspect of richness and simplicity.

"With regard to the company in which it stands, let the reader suppose the new square at Westminster-abbey converted into a broad grass walk, and standing in a much more solitary part of the town. Let him suppose at one end of this

walk the Leaning Tower, with some small but elegant houses on one side of it, looking down the grass plot; the baptistery, a rotunda, standing by itself at the opposite end; the public hospital, an extremely neat and quiet building, occupying the principal length of the road which borders the grass plot on one side; on the other side, and on the grass itself, the Cathedral, stretching between the Leaning Tower and the Baptistery; and lastly, at the back of the Cathedral, and visible between the openings at its two ends, the Campo Santo, or burial-ground, a set of walled marble cloisters, full of the oldest paintings in Italy. All these buildings are detached; they all stand in a free, open situation; they all look as if they were built but a year ago; they are all of marble; the whole place is kept extremely clean, the very grass in a state of greenness not common to turf in the South; and there are trees looking upon it over a wall next the Baptistery. Let the reader add to this scene a few boys playing about, all ready to answer your questions in pure Tuscan; women occasionally passing, with veils or bare heads, or now and then a couple of friars; and though finer individual sights may be found in the world, it will be difficult to come upon an assemblage of objects more rich in their communion.

"The Baptistery is a large rotunda, richly carved, and appropriated solely to the purpose after which it is christened. It is in a mixed style,

and was built in the twelfth century. Mr. Forsythe, who is deep in arches and polygons, objects to the crowd of unnecessary columns; to the 'hideous tunnel which conceals the fine swell of the cupola,' and to the appropriation of so large an edifice to a christening. The 'tunnel' may deserve his wrath; but his architectural learning sometimes behaves as ill as the tunnel, and obscures his better taste. A christening, in the eyes of a good Catholic, is at least as important an object as a rotunda; and there is a religious sentiment in the profusion with which ornament is heaped upon edifices of this nature. It forms a beauty of itself, and gives even mediocrity a sort of abundance of intention that looks like the wealth of genius. The materials take leave of their materiality, and crowd together into a worship of their own. It is no longer, 'let every thing,' only, 'that has *breath*, praise the Lord;' but let every thing else praise him, and take a meaning and life accordingly. Let column obscure column, as in a multitude of men; let arch strain upon arch, as if to ascend to heaven; let there be infinite details, conglomerations, mysteries, lights, darknesses; and let the birth of a new soul be well and worthily celebrated in the midst of all.

"The cathedral is in the Greek style of the middle ages, a style which Mr. Forsythe thinks should rather be called the Lombard, 'as it ap-

peared in Italy first, under the Lombard princes.' He says that it includes ' whatever was grand or beautiful in the works of the middle ages;' and that ' this was, perhaps, the noblest of them all.' He proceeds to find fault with certain incongruities, amongst which are some remains of Pagan sculpture, left standing in a Christian church; but he enthusiastically admires the pillars of oriental granite that support the roof. The outside of the building consists of mere heaps of marble, mounting by huge steps to the roof; but their simplicity, as well as size, gives them a new sort of grandeur; and Mr. Forsythe has overlooked the extraordinary sculpture of the bronze doors, worthy of the same hand that made those others at Florence, which Michael Angelo said were fit to be the gates of Paradise. It is divided into compartments, the subjects of which are taken from scripture; and if the doors at Florence surpass it, they must be divine indeed. The relief is the most graceful and masterly conceivable; the perspective astonishing, as if in a drawing; and equal justice is done to the sharp monstrosities of the devil with his bat-wings, and the gentle graces of the Saviour. There is a great number of pictures in the cathedral, good enough to assist rather than spoil the effect, but not remarkable. I have not been present when the church-service has been at its best; but the leader does not seem to rely much on his singers, by the noise which he makes

in behalf of time. His vehement roll of paper sounds like the lashing of a whip. One evening in August, I saw the whole inside of the cathedral lighted up with wax, in honour of the Assumption. The lights were disposed with much taste, but soon produced a great heat. There was a gigantic picture of the Virgin displayed at the upper end, who was to be supposed sitting in heaven, surrounded with the celestial odours; but she was 'dark with excess of bright.' It is impossible to see this profusion of lights, especially when one knows their symbolical meaning, without being struck with the source from which Dante took his idea of the beatified spirit. His heaven, filled with lights, and lights, too, arranged in figures, which glow with lustre in proportion to the beatitude of the souls within them, is clearly a sublimation of a Catholic church. And it is not the worse for it, that nothing escapes the look of definitiveness and materiality like fire. It is so airy, joyous, and divine a thing, when separated from the idea of pain and an ill purpose, that the language of happiness naturally adopts its terms, and can tell of nothing more rapturous than burning bosoms and sparkling eyes. The seraph of the Hebrew theology was a Fire. But then the materials of heaven and hell are the same? Yes: and a very fine piece of moral theology might be made out of their sameness, always omitting the brute injustice of eternal punishment. Is it not by our

greater or less cultivation of health and benevolence, that we all make out our hells and heavens upon earth? by a turning of the same materials and passions of which we are all composed, to different accounts? Burning now in the horrors of hell with fear, hatred, and uncharitableness,—and now in the joys or at least the happier sympathies of heaven, with good effort, courage, gratitude, generosity, love? When Dante was asked where he found his hell, *he* answered, 'upon earth.' He found his heaven in the same place; and no disparagement, either, to a future state. If it is impossible for the mass of matter to be lost, or even diminished, it seems equally impossible for the mass of sensations to be lost; and it is surely worth while, whatever our creeds may be, to take as much care as possible that what we have to do with it may be done well, and rendered worth the chance of continuance.

"The crowning glory of Pisa is the Campo Santo. I entered for the first time at twilight, when the indistinct shapes, colours, and antiquity of the old paintings wonderfully harmonized with the nature of the place. I chose to go towards evening when I saw it again; and though the sunset came upon me too fast to allow me to see all the pictures as minutely as I could have wished, I saw enough to warrant my giving an opinion of them; and I again had the pleasure of standing in the spot at twilight. It is an oblong enclosure, about

the size of Stratford Place, and surrounded with cloisters wider and lighter than those of Westminster, at least such is my impression. The middle is grassed earth, the surface of which, for some depth, is supposed to have been brought from Palestine at the time of the crusades, and to possess the virtue of decomposing bodies in the course of a few hours. The tradition is, that Ubaldo Lanfranchi, archbishop of Pisa, who commanded the forces contributed by his countrymen, brought the earth away with him in his ships; but though such a proceeding would not have been impossible, the story is now, I believe, regarded as a mere legend. The decomposition of the bodies might have been effected by other means. Persons are buried both in this enclosure and in the cloisters, but only persons of rank or celebrity. Most of the inscriptions, for instance (of which there are some hundreds, all on marble, and mixed with busts and figures), are to the memory of Pisans in the rank of nobility; but there are several, also, to artists and men of letters. The most interesting grave is that of Benozzo, one of the old painters, who lies at the foot of his own works. Here is a handsome monument, with a profile, to Algarotti, erected by Frederick of Prussia. Pignotti, the fabulist, has another; and Fabroni, the late eulogist of eminent Italians, on handsome paper, has a bust so good-natured and full of a certain jolly gusto, that we long to have eat olives

with him. In truth, these modern gettings up of renown, in the shape of busts and monuments, to middling men of talent, appear misplaced, when you come to notice them. They look in the way. But the old pictures, which they seem to contradict and interfere with, reconcile them at last. Any thing and every thing mortal has its business here. The pretensions of mediocrity are exalted into the claims of the human being. One blushes to deny the writers of amiable books what one would demand for one's own common nature; or to think of excluding a man for doing better than hundreds of the people there, merely because he has not done so well as some who are not there. Pignotti and Algarotti, at last, even harmonize with some sprightly figures, who play their harps and their love-songs in the pictures, and who flourished hundreds of years ago, as their readers flourish now; and even the bustling and well-fed amenity of Monsignor Fabroni is but a temporary contradiction, which will be rendered serious some day by the crumbling away of his marble cheeks, or the loss of some over-lively feature. Let him, for God's sake, live in inscription, and look treats in stone.

"Besides these modern pieces of sculpture, there has been for some years a collection of ancient marbles, chiefly urns and sarcophagi, together with some fragments of the early Italian school. It is so impossible to pay proper attention to any

large collection of art without repeated visits, that I do not pretend to have given it to the old pictures, much less to the marbles. The first impression is not pleasant; their orderly array, the numerals upon them, and the names of the donors upon the walls behind, giving the whole too much the air of a shew-room or common gallery. The pictures form part of the sentiment of the place as a burial-ground, and would certainly be better by themselves; but the antiquity of the marbles reconciles us at last. From the glance I took at them, many appear to be poor enough, but several very good. I noticed, in particular, one or two sarcophagi with reliefs of Bacchus and Ariadne, and a head supposed to be that of a Roman Emperor, and looking quite brutal enough. As to the Paganism, I do not quarrel, like Mr. Forsythe, with the presence of things Pagan in a Christian edifice; not only because the Pagan and Catholic religions have much that is in common externally, their draperies, altars, incense, music, winged genii, &c.; but because, from a principle which the author of a new comment on Dante has noticed, there is in fact an identity of interests and aspirations in all these struggles of mortal man after a knowledge of things supernatural.

"The paintings on the walls, the great glory of Pisa, are by Orgagna, Simon Memmi, Giotto, Buffalmacco, Benozzo, and others, all more or less renowned by illustrious pens; all, with more

or less gusto, the true aud reverend harbingers of the greatest painters in Italy. Simon Memmi is the artist celebrated by Petrarch for his portrait of Laura; Buffalmacco is the mad wag (grave enough here) who cuts such a figure in the old Italian novels; and Giotto, the greatest of them all, is the friend of Dante, the hander down of his likeness to posterity, and himself the Dante of his art. High as this eulogy is, nobody will think it too high who has seen his works in the Campo Santo. They are of the same fine old dreaming character, the same imaginative mixture of things familiar with things unearthly, the same strenuous and (when they choose) gentle expression; in short, the same true discernment of "the differences of things,"—now grappling with a fiend or a fierce thought, now sympathizing with fear and sorrow—now setting the muscles of grim warriors, now dissolving in the looks and flowing tresses of women, or setting a young gallant in an attitude to which Raphael might have traced his cavaliers. And this is more or less the character of the very oldest pictures in the Campo Santo. They have the germs of beauty and greatness, however obscured and stiffened, the struggle of true pictorial feeling with the inexperience of art. As you proceed along the walls, you see gracefulness and knowledge gradually helping one another, and legs and arms, lights, shades, and details of all sorts taking their proper measures and positions,

as if every separate thing in the world of painting had been created with repeated efforts, till it answered the original and always fair idea. They are like a succession of quaint dreams of humanity during the twilight of creation.

" I have already mentioned that the pictures are painted on the walls of the four cloisters. They occupy the greater part of the elevation of these walls, beginning at top and finishing at a reasonable distance from the pavement. The subjects are from the Old Testament up to the time of Solomon, from the legends of the middle ages, particularly St. Ranieri (the patron saint of Pisa), and from the history of the Crucifixion, Resurrection, &c., with the Day of Judgment. There is also a Triumph of Death. The colours of some of them, especially of the sky and ship in the voyage of St. Ranieri, are wonderfully preserved: the sky looks as intensely blue as the finest out of doors. But others are much injured by the sea air, which blows into Pisa; and it is a pity that the windows of the cloisters in these quarters are not glazed, to protect them from further injury. The best idea, perhaps, which I can give an Englishman of the general character of the paintings, is by referring him to the engravings of Albert Durer, and the serious parts of Chaucer. There is the same want of proper costume, the same intense feeling of the human being, both in body and soul; the same bookish, romantic, and

retired character; the same evidences, in short, of antiquity and commencement, weak (where it is weak) for want of a settled art and language, but strong for that very reason in first impulses; and in putting down all that is felt. An old poet, however, always has the advantage of an old painter, because he is not obliged to a literal description of arms, legs, and attitudes, and thus escapes half his quaintness. But they truly illustrate one another. Chaucer's *Duke* Theseus, clothed and behaving accordingly; his yawning courtiers, who thank king Cambuscan for dismissing them to bed; his god Janus, keeping Christmas with his fire-side and his dish of brawn, &c., exhibit the same fantastic alternations of violated costume and truth of nature. The way in which he mingles together personages of all times, nations, and religions, real and fictitious, Samson and Turnus with Socrates, Ovid with St. Augustin, &c. and his descriptions of actual 'purtreyings on a wall,' in which are exhibited at once Narcissus, Solomon, Venus, Crœsus, and 'the porter Idleness,' resemble the manner in which some of the painters of the Campo Santo defy all perspective, and fill one picture with twenty different solitudes. There is a painting, for instance, devoted to the celebrated anchorites or hermits of the desert. They are represented according to their several legends—reading, dying, undergoing temptations, assisted by lions, &c. At

first they all look like fantastic actors in the same piece; but you dream, and are reconciled. The contempt of every thing like interval, and of all which may have happened in it, makes the ordinary events of life seem as of little moment; and the mind is exclusively occupied with the sacred old men and their solitudes, all at the same time, and yet each by himself. The manner in which some of the hoary saints in these pictures pore over their books and carry their decrepit old age, full of a bent and absorbed feebleness; the set limbs of the warriors on horseback; the sidelong unequivocal looks of some of the ladies playing on harps, and conscious of their ornaments; the people of fashion, seated in rows, with Time coming up unawares to destroy them; the other rows of elders and doctors of the church, forming part of the array of heaven; the uplifted hand of Christ denouncing the wicked at the Day of Judgment; the daring satires occasionally introduced against hypocritical monks and nuns; the profusion of attitudes, expressions, incidents, broad draperies, ornaments of all sorts, visions, mountains, ghastly looking cities, fiends, angels, sybilline old women, dancers, virgin brides, mothers and children, princes, patriarchs, dying saints;—it is an injustice to the superabundance and truth of conception in all this multitude of imagery, not to recognize the real inspirers as well as harbingers of Raphael and Michael Angelo, instead

of confining the honour to the Massacios and Peruginos. The Massacios and Peruginos, for all that ever I saw, meritorious as they are, are no more to be compared with them, than the sonnetteers of Henry the Eighth's time are to be compared with Chaucer. Even in the very rudest of the pictures, where the souls of the dying are going out of their mouths in the shape of little children, there are passages not unworthy of Dante or Michael Angelo: angels trembling at the blowing of trumpets, men in vain attempting to carry their friends into heaven, and saints, who have lived ages of temperance, sitting in calm air, upon the hills, far above the triumphant progress of Death, who goes bearing down the great, the luxurious, and the young. The picture by Titian, in which he has represented the three stages of existence, bubble-blowing childhood, love-making manhood, and death-contemplating old age, is not better conceived, and hardly better made out, than some of the designs of Orgagna and Giotto. Since I have beheld the Campo Santo, I have enriched my day-dreams and my stock of the admirable, and am thankful that I have names by heart to which I owe homage and gratitude. Tender and noble Orgagna, be thou blessed beyond the happiness of thine own heaven! Giotto, be thou a name to me hereafter, of a kindred brevity, solidity, and stateliness, with that of thy friend Dante!

" The air of Pisa is soft and balmy to the last degree. Mr. Forsythe thinks it too moist, and countenance is given to his opinion by the lowness and flatness of the place, which lies in a plain full of springs and rivers, between the Appenines and the sea. The inhabitants, also, have a proverb—'*Pisa pesa a chi posa*,'-- which may be translated—

" Pisa sits ill
On those who sit still."

" To me the air seemed as dry as it is soft; and most people will feel oppressed every where, if they do not take exercise. The lower rooms of the houses are reckoned, however, too damp in winter, at least on the Lungarno; though the winter season is counted delicious, and the Grand Duke always comes here to spend two months of it. The noon-day sun in summer time is formidable, resembling more the intense heat struck from burning metal than any thing we can conceive of it in England; but a sea-breeze often blows of an evening, when the inhabitants take their exercise. A look-out upon the Lungarno at noon-day is curious. A blue sky is overhead, dazzling stone underneath; the yellow Arno gliding along, generally with nothing upon it, sometimes a lazy sail; the houses on the opposite side, sleeping with their green blinds down; and nobody passing but a few labourers, carmen, or country-women in their veils and handkerchiefs, hastening

with bare feet, but never too fast to forget a certain air of strut and stateliness. Dante, in one of his love poems, praises his mistress for walking like a peacock, nay, even like a crane, strait above herself:

> " *Soave a quisa va di un bel pavone,*
> *Diritta sopra se, coma una grua.*"
>
> " Sweetly she goes, like the bright peacock; strait
> Above herself, like to the lady crane."

" This is the common walk of Italian women, rich and poor. The step of Madame Vestris on the stage resembles it. To an English eye, at first, it seems wanting in a certain modesty and moral grace; but you see what the grave poet has to say for it, and it is not associated in an Italian mind with any such deficiency: that it has a beauty of its own is certain.

" Solitary as Pisa may look at noon-day, it is only by comparison with what you find in very populous cities. Its desolate aspect is much exaggerated. The people, for the most part, sit in shade at their doors in the hottest weather, so that it cannot look so solitary as many parts of London at the same time of the year; and though it is true that grass grows in some of the streets, it is only in the remotest. The streets, for the most part, are kept very neat and clean, not excepting the poorest alleys, a benefit arising not only from the fine pavement which is every where to be found, but from the wise use to which crimi-

nals are put. The punishment of death is not kept up in Tuscany. Robbers, and even murderers, are made to atone for the ill they have done by the good works of sweeping and keeping clean. A great murderer on the English stage used formerly to have a regular suit of brick-dust: in Tuscany, or at least in Pisa, robbers are dressed in a red livery, and murderers in a yellow. A stranger looks with a feeling more grave than curiosity at these saffron-coloured miscreants, quietly doing their duty in the open streets, and not seeming to avoid observation; but they look just like other men. They are either too healthy, by temperance and exercise, to exhibit a conscience, or think they make up very well by their labour for so trifling an ebullition of animal spirits; and they have a good deal to say for themselves, considering their labour is in chains and for life.

"The inhabitants of Pisa, in general, are not reckoned a favourable specimen of Tuscan looks. You are sure to meet fine faces in any large assembly, but the common run is certainly bad enough. They are hard, prematurely aged, and what expression there is, is worldly. Some of them have no expression whatever, but are as destitute of speculation and feeling as masks. The bad Italian face and the good Italian face are the extremes of insensibility and the reverse; but it is rare that the eyes are not fine, and the females have a profusion of good hair. Lady Morgan has

justly remarked the promising countenances of Italian children, compared with what they turn out to be as they grow older; and adds, with equal justice, that it is an evident affair of government and education. You doubly pity the corruptions of a people who, besides their natural genius, preserve, in the very midst of their sophistication, a frankness distinct from it, and an entire freedom from affectation. An Italian annoys you neither with his pride, like an Englishman, nor with his vanity, like a Frenchman; he is quiet and natural, self-possessed without wrapping himself up sulkily in a corner, and ready for cheerfulness without grimace. His frankness sometimes takes the air of a simplicity, at once singularly misplaced and touching. A young man who exhibited a taste for all good and generous sentiments, and who, according to the representations of his friends, was a very worthy as well as ingenious person, did not scruple to tell me one day, as a matter of course, that he made a point of getting acquainted with the rich families, purely to be invited to their houses, and partake of their good things. Many an Englishman would undoubtedly do this, but he would hardly be so frank about it to a stranger; nor would an Englishman of the same tastes in other respects be easily found to act so. But it is the old story of 'following a multitude to do evil,' and is no doubt accounted a mere matter of necessity and good sense.

" The Pisans claim the merit of speaking as pure Italian, if not purer, as any people in Tuscany; and there is a claim among the poorer orders, in this part of Italy, which has been too hastily credited by foreigners, of speaking a language quite as pure as the educated classes. It is certainly not true, whatever may be claimed for their Tuscan, as ancient or popular Tuscan. The Pisans, in general, also seem to have corrupted their pronunciation, and the Florentines too, if report is to be believed. They use a soft aspirate instead of the *c*, as if their language was not genteel and tender enough already. *Casa* is *hasa; cuoco* (a cook), *hoho ; locando, lohando ; cocomero, hohomero ;* and even *crazie* (a sort of coin), *hrazie.* But they speak well out, trolling the words clearly over the tongue. There seems a good deal of talent for music among them, which does not know how to make its way. You never hear the poorest melody, but somebody strikes in with what he can muster up of a harmony. Boys go about of an evening, and parties sit at their doors, singing popular airs, and hanging as long as possible on the last chord. It is not an uncommon thing for gentlemen to play their guitars as they go along to a party. I heard one evening a voice singing past a window, that would not have disgraced an opera; and I once walked behind a common postboy who, in default of having another to help him to a harmony, contrived

to make chords of all his notes by rapidly sounding the second and treble one after the other. The whole people are bitten with a new song, and hardly sing any thing else till the next: there were two epidemic airs of this kind, when I was there, which had been imported from Florence, and which the inhabitants sung from morning till night, though they were nothing remarkable. And yet Pisa is said to be the least fond of music of any city in Tuscany.

"I must not omit a great curiosity which is in the neighbourhood of Pisa, towards the sea, namely, the existence of a race of camels, which was brought from the east during the crusades. I have not seen them out of the city, though the novelty of the sight in Europe, the sand of the sea-shore, and the vessels that sometimes combine with the landscape in the distance, are said to give it a look singularly Asiatic. They are used for agricultural purposes, and may be sometimes met within the walls. The forest between Pisa and another part of the sea-shore, is extensive and woody.

"Pisa is a tranquil, an imposing, and even now a beautiful and stately city. It looks like the residence of an university; many parts of it seem made up of colleges, and we feel as if we ought to 'walk gowned.' It possesses the *Campo Santo*, rich above earthly treasure; its river is the river of Tuscan poetry, and furnished Michael Angelo

with the subject of his cartoon, and it disputes with Florence the birth of Galileo. Here at all events he studied and he taught; here his mind was born, and another great impulse given to the progress of philosophy and Liberal Opinion."

At Pisa, an unfortunate difference took place between Lord Byron and Mr. Leigh Hunt, of which the following particulars have been derived from one of the parties concerned. "*Parasina*" was considered by Lord Byron as the best of all his minor poems; in fact, it was the only one that he ever could be induced to speak of in company, and when he did so, it was in language that silenced all contradiction: it *was* so,—and it *must* be so, seemed to be the sovereign pleasure of him whose word no man dared to doubt, who wished to retain any particle of his favours. Mr. Snelgrove, lieutenant of *L'Eclair*, was at Leghorn, and of course a frequent attendant at Pisa, at the time that Mr. Leigh Hunt was the constant companion of his Lordship. He noticed him on every occasion, and made him at least so far forget himself, that he considered he had power and ability to criticize the works of his great benefactor. He presumed to censure "*Parasina*," and Mr. Dodd, the Deputy Consul (formerly clerk to Captain Rowley) traced to the pen of Leigh Hunt some criticisms that had appeared in the *Livourna Gazette* and *Lucca* newspaper. Mr. Hunt ought to have been aware how jealous an author is of the

darling offspring of his muse, and he ought to have spared the feelings, or, if he pleases, the weaknesses of his friend and benefactor. But wits, like game-cocks, never spare each other. From this time our informant states that Lord Byron never saw or spoke to Mr. Leigh Hunt, or any of his connexions.

Lord Byron, while at Pisa, resided near the *Leaning Tower*, at Signora Dominesia's; a lady who keeps several small houses in which travellers meet with excellent accommodations, and are furnished with guides to lead them to the different curiosities about the place, and on the road to Florence. In the cottage, or pavilion, on the south side near the Arno, Lord Byron lived, and led a secluded life, for he seldom saw strangers. The principal visitor was a captain of a French ship, a man of most forbidding mien, who yet seemed to possess his Lordship's confidence. Captain Guion, of the British navy, and his sister, also visited him, and, in their company, he walked very frequently in the woods on the banks of the river. A strange fancy took him here; he employed himself and Capt. Guion in sawing timber, planing it down, and in the space of three months they built a four-oared boat with their own hands. In this boat they sailed on the *Arno*, and visited Smollet's tomb, on a particular day of jubilee; there, as customary, they had a dinner, and drank to the memory of the *Novelist*. Lord Byron ex-

pressed himself in no very flattering terms; he said—Mrs. Macauley was a better historian, Elkanah Settle a better play-wright; but no author, in or out of existence, was a superior novelist. Mr. Davenport, an English merchant settled at Leghorn, was his Lordship's banker and agent, and also his private friend; he was generally one of the party at Pisa, and from a fine healthy man, became ill, low, shrunk, and hypochondriacal. Lord Byron requested him to remain at Pisa, and try if tranquillity and solitude would not restore him to health and spirits. Mr. Davenport had a little niece, about nine years old, and she attended him at one of the Signora's cottages. In time he related to Lord Byron the cause of his melancholy: his affairs were deeply embarrassed, and he had fears of being obliged to stop payment, after a course of business with all quarters of the globe for thirty-six years, conducted with honour and integrity. Lord Byron sympathized with his misfortunes, and, desiring him to be composed, promised to put them in a train of accommodation. With the Grand Duke Lord Byron was intimate, and to him he repaired. Mr. Davenport owed him nearly £20,000, and Lord Byron prevailed upon him to accept moderate payments at long dates; the same persuasions he used with the Grand Duke he exerted with the other creditors; namely, the eloquence of the heart, and appeals to the feelings. In short, after a month's absence

in Leghorn, Lord Byron returned to Pisa, having arranged all Mr. Davenport's affairs. Mr. Davenport left his niece under his Lordship's care, and embarked for Elba with Captain Guion on business. Captain Guion was only a Commander in the Navy, and his Lordship furnished him with recommendations to the Admiral, a person whom his Lordship had never seen. Sir Charles Cotton then commanded the fleet off Toulon, and received Lord Byron's letters with great pleasure. He said that "out of respect to the genius of Lord Byron he would do something for his friend." He took Guion on board his ship as a volunteer, and at the destruction of the French squadron at the mouth of the Rhone, gave him charge of a division of boats. Guion acquitted himself so well, that Sir Charles made him a post-captain; and, on Guion's announcing the same to Lord Byron, the latter sent him a pair of epaulettes, and an invitation to Leghorn. By chance the first port Guion made in the *Confiance* (of twenty-four guns) after his promotion was Leghorn; and thence he made his way to Pisa, where, upon a sick bed, he found his friend, the father of his fortunes. Lord Byron insisted on being removed from Pisa, and was carried in a cot to the Arno, where he embarked in the boat of his own building, and was conveyed to a summer-house three miles down the river. Mr. Davenport's niece, only ten years of age, was his only female attendant; Captain Guion, and

a servant named *Jack Payne*, did all other requisite offices. In this delightful place he soon recovered, and it was singularly pleasing to witness the delight he took in the little girl's company. She read to him, and he corrected her language as she proceeded; she brought paper and pencil; he drew for her, and made her copy; and submitted to her cutting his nails, cropping his hair, or any thing she pleased; in short, this little girl could not offend him. His expressions were—"Children are little angels, and men become for a moment gods, when in their company." At Leghorn this young lady left Lord Byron, and has since been married to Count De Danlemer, a general in the Italian service. With this lady Lord Byron kept up a constant correspondence, we believe, till his death, and when *Canova* chiselled out four busts for him, one was sent to the Countess De Danlemer; one to Mr. Ross of Gibraltar; one to Sir Charles Cotton, and one to Lieutenant Hill of the Royal Navy. Canova never did but these four busts; all others are copies, and Lord Byron paid Canova £800 for his trouble. It is true that Lord Byron noticed Canova at Venice; but the latter was by no means a favourite. He used to say that "Canova was a shadow of Praxiteles in sculpture, as Rossini was a shadow of Mozart in music."—At Leghorn, Lord Byron being completely recovered, he gave several parties on board the ship of Captain Guion,

and then returned to Pisa, where he had still some English acquaintance. This second time, he fixed his quarters at Pisa with a *Mrs. Wilson*, whose husband had been clerk in a counting-house at Leghorn. With this old lady he frequently strolled, and for the sum of 400 dollars purchased her cottage, which he gave her, with the charge of taking care of *two old dogs past service*. Lord Byron had been acquainted with her family in London, and was thus induced to be a friend to her. The poor in Pisa will long remember his residence, and deplore his loss.

The scheme of forming a *Literary Society* at Pisa for the circulating of *Literary Opinions*, was not much calculated to coincide with the notions of the framers of the HOLY ALLIANCE,* who

* Academies, or Literary Institutions, to be useful, must be permitted a free discussion, in order to their collecting, digesting, and preserving the stock of human knowledge. They must be independent and free from all controul. But when they are under the awe of governments obliged to flatter individuals, and truckle to the great, they can never display independence and energy of mind, or possess the courage necessary for the display of genius. Under despotic governments, they may become instruments in the hands of tyrants for repressing the progress of the mind, and preventing the diffusion of knowledge. It must be evident, therefore, from the characters of the parties, that the '*New Literary Society of Pisa*" and the members of that conspiracy against the happiness of mankind, impudently styled the "*Holy Alliance*," could no more agree together than (to use a catholic phrase) the *Devil* and *Holy Water*.

dreaded the pen much more than the sword, having myriads of mercenary soldiers and bayonets to oppose to the latter, but possessing no means sufficiently powerful to seduce or overawe men of genius to abandon or prostitute their talents in defence of tyranny, and the vassalage of millions before the thrones of a few continental despots, strong only in the divisions which they excite and foment. It began to be rumoured that the society at Pisa was a second edition of the labours of the French illuminati, who had rendered atheism and jacobinism triumphant in France, and deluged that country with blood. Statesmen, ecclesiastics, fanatics, zealots, functionaries, and the military, were all forward to sound the alarm, and up in arms to put down the rising academy of sedition and blasphemy, as it was termed. Lord Byron, during his residence at Venice, had been stigmatized as a gloomy misanthrope, because he avoided all intercourse with his countrymen; but having become more accessible, when surrounded by his friends at Pisa, the tone was changed, and this opposite conduct was attributed, by the same infernal spirit of malevolence, to the scheme of collecting around him a constellation of talent for the purpose of disseminating principles inimical to the peace of Europe, to the religion, morality and happiness (body and soul!) of the whole human race!! "*Aut inveniam aut faciam.*"—I will either find or

pick a quarrel, was evidently their motto, and, accordingly, by whom set on the reader may probably guess, a serious fracas broke out between his Lordship and some of the Tuscan military, and it may be pretty well guessed, that at the *argumentum baculinum*, his Lordship and his friends must have been overpowered by numbers, even had not their antagonists been backed by *authority*. We know not whether this affair hastened his Lordship's removal, or having fully gratified his curiosity at Pisa, he wished to go elsewhere; but he left a place, which was not at the time sufficiently sensible of the honour of the residence of a man, whom any other city in the world would have been proud to entertain.

CHAPTER V.

The Congress at Verona, the Holy Alliance, and "The Age of Bronze;" or Retaliation.—Mr. Moore's "Fables for the Holy Alliance."—Lord Byron's Tale of the "Four Barbers of Bagdat." — "The Island; or, Christian and his Comrades:" a Poem.—"Werner," a Tragedy.—Moore's and Byron's Poems of "The Loves of the Angels," and "*Heaven*, and *Earth*," compared.—Lord Byron's last work, "The Deformed Transformed," a Drama.—Remarks on it.—Lord Byron's generous Application of the vast Sums of Money received for the Copyright of his Works.—Mr. Moore and Mr. Dallas, and Lord Byron's *impromptu* on the latter Gentleman.—The Lord Chancellor's Injunction considered.—Public Ingratitude.

Lord Byron was destined to experience in his own person the blessed effects of the *paternal* care of those despots, to whom were entrusted (as they themselves phrase it), or, as may be more truly expressed, who have arrogated to themselves the destinies of Europe, and of the whole civilized world. The German States, Prussia, Sweden, Spain, and Italy combined together to pull down the common disturber of the peace of Europe, Napoleon Buonaparte, on the sacred promise of the monarchs, then nothing more than the hum-

ble dependents and crouching vassals of the Emperor of the French, that immediately on the restoration of the ancient order of things, they should enjoy constitutions as *free states*. The object was no sooner obtained than the promise was forgotten; and the *grateful* monarchs formed a conspiracy to over-awe the world, to restrain the progress of knowledge in general, and thus to crush, *in ovo*, the embryo of freedom, from a conviction that slavery is the only state adapted to despotic sway, and that ignorance is the surest road to slavery. Such is the true history of the *Holy Alliance*, the most celebrated convention that ever was hatched against the honour and happiness of the whole human race. Intoxicated by the success of the battle of Waterloo; flattered by those monarchs, of whom she had ever been, and still continues to be, the object of envy, hatred, and calumny, Great Britain, in an excess of raptures, was unfortunately deluded into a seeming sanction of the Congress, or rather conspiracy, at Laybach and Verona, by permitting one of the principal of her officers of state to be present at the conferences. The Marquis of Londonderry, with a strong mind, was possessed of none of those qualifications which are the result of a classical education; he danced with crowned heads; and crowned heads danced with the Marchioness; and what with condescension, flattery, and other irresistible ways, known

to themselves, he was easily deluded by the despots to coincide with their way of thinking, that the *Crown* is *every thing*, and the *people* are *nothing*. He pledged himself to them to support that opinion on his return to England; but finding that he could not bring his countrymen into the same train of thinking, and that he had pledged himself to more than he could perform, when the time came that he was again to meet the Congress, and to be compelled to acknowledge his error—that he had undertaken what was impossible to be performed, in England at least, *his fortitude of mind forsook him.*

It was thought at the time that the language which Lord Byron made use of, in one of his prefaces, respecting Lord Londonderry, was excessively harsh and reprehensible; but Lord Byron had been in the country where the *conspiracy* against the rights and happiness of mankind had been carried on, and had collected more correct information of what had been done there, than any one in England, even the Marquis's own colleagues, could be possibly aware of. He boldly made the charge that his country *had been betrayed*, and the Marquis*—peace to his *manes!*

* From a list laid before Parliament, on the subject of "Presents from Foreign Sovereigns to his Majesty's principal Secretary of State," it appears that Lord Castlereagh received in *two* years, ending 5th January 1816, *eighteen* presents. The value of these presents is not stated, but as they are usually estimated

But though, by the death of Lord Londonderry, the fatal, accursed link, which bound Britain to that *infernal chain*, was apparently dissevered, yet that a partial leaning to that system still sways in a certain quarter is but too manifest, in our suffering France to subdue Spain; in our refusing to acknowledge the independence of the South American States, after they have long thrown off the Spanish thraldom; and by our insidiously depressing, rather than generously aiding, our Christian brethren, the brave Greeks, against their barbarian tyrants.

Lord Byron was so highly incensed that the despots who swayed the Congress at Verona, not content with insulting and trampling on the world, should interfere (by means of their satellite, the Tuscan), in *their military way*, with his literary pursuits, that he instantly determined on taking vengeance for the unmanly attack—*in his way:* and this determination gave birth to the poem of "THE AGE OF BRONZE,* or *Carmen Se-*

at £1,000 each, he received £18,000, besides expenses of special missions for two years, £40,000 more.

* The confederacy of *crowned heads* against the peace, dignity, and happiness of nations, also employed the pen of Mr. Thomas Moore, who, whilst on a visit to Lord Byron at Venice, composed part of his "*Fables for the Holy Alliance*," which he dedicated to his Lordship in the following terms:

"Dear Lord Byron,

"Though this volume should possess no other merit in your eyes, than that of recalling the short time we passed together at

culare, et Annus Haud Mirabilis," a satirical work, and so wholly of a *political* nature, contrary to Lord Byron's usual custom, that many persons of sound judgment have doubted whether the production was really from his Lordship's pen or not; but being induced, by the circumstances before stated, to a contrary belief, and to make a proper inquiry into the truth of the case, we have authority for saying that the work is really his Lordship's own production, and as such it is now our business to give an account of it. The work commences with telling us that "the good old times are gone," Billy Pitt's good old times, and that he, too, is dust to dust. It then philosophizes on the instability of human grandeur, in the person of the new Sesostris, who harnessed kings to his chariot, the late Emperor of the French, Napoleon Buonaparte. It ascribes his fallen condition to his frantic ambition of enslaving mankind, but asserts that such a scheme will never be practicable while the memory of Franklin and Washington survives. It will not be (the poet adds); the

Venice, when some of the trifles which it contains were written, you will, I am sure, receive the dedication of it with pleasure, and believe that I am,

"My dear Lord,

"Ever faithfully yours," &c.

The *Royal Smithfield Salesmen* are a good standing jest for a *free press*, and deservedly so.

spark of freedom is awakened in Spain, in America, in GREECE—

"Lone, lost, abandon'd in their utmost need
By Christians, unto whom they gave their creed;
The desolated lands, the ravag'd isle,
The foster'd feud, encourag'd to beguile,
The aid evaded, and the cold delay,
Prolong'd but in the hope to make a prey;
These, these shall tell the tale, and Greece can shew
The false friend worse than the infuriate foe;
But this is well; Greeks only should free Greece,
Not the barbarian, with his mask of peace."

The poet next turns his eyes towards Spain, where freedom makes advances in spite of all efforts to keep it down, and calls upon France to advance and win—not Spain—but her own freedom. He then turns to the Congress at Verona, and describes the scenes going on there. He next lashes the Czar, and advises him—

"Better reclaim thy desarts, turn thy swords
To ploughshares, shave and wash thy Bashkir hordes,
Redeem thy realms from slav'ry and the knout,
Than follow headlong in the fatal route,
To infest the clime whose skies and laws are pure;
With thy foul legions—Spain wants no manure."

Louis, le Désiré, is described as an epicurean, a gourmand, who was much better placed at *Hartwell*, than on a throne—(perhaps he himself was much happier)—a martyr to indigestion and the

gout. The poet then pays his compliments to Albion and Britons; George,—Wellington—Waterloo—Castlereagh—the boroughmongers, and the stockjobbers:

"On Shylock's shore behold them stand afresh,
To cut from nations' hearts their '*pound of flesh.*'"

The poet then returns to the Congress at Verona, and describes Metternich, Wellington, Chateaubriand,* and Montmorency, playing off their juggling, diplomatic tricks; and then notices the imperial daughter, the imperial bride, the imperial victim, Austria's daughter, Frances's widow, the Ex-Empress, sunk into a little Duchess of Parma:

"She comes!—the Andromache (but not Racine's
Nor Homer's) lo! on Pyrrhus' arm she leans!
Yes, the right arm, yet red from Waterloo,
Which cut her lord's half shatter'd sceptre through,
Is offer'd and accepted! Could a slave
Do more? or less? and *he* in his new grave!

* In a note, the noble author plainly alludes to the *bribery* which was resorted to at Verona, to induce the diplomatic corps to abandon the interests of Europe, and consign the greater part of it, to vassalage and ignominy—he says: "Monsieur Chateaubriand, who has not forgotten the author in the minister, received a handsome compliment at Verona from a literary sovereign:—'Ah, Monsieur C——, are you related to that Chateaubriand, who—who—who has written *something*?' (Ecrit *quelque chose!*) It is said that the author of "Atala" repented him for a moment of his *legitimacy.*"

Her eye, her cheek, betray no inward strife,
And the *Ex*-Empress grows as *Ex* a wife!
So much for human ties in royal breasts!
Why spare men's feelings, when their own are jests?

The poet's muse then inclines to weep—

——————— "but ere a tear was spilt,
She caught Sir William Curtis in a kilt!
While throng'd the chiefs of ev'ry highland clan
To hail their brother, Vich Jan Alderman!
Guildhall grows Gael, and echos with Erse roar,
While all the Common Council cry—"Claymore!"
To see proud Albyn's tartans, as a belt,
Gird the gross sir-loin of a city Celt,
She burst into a laughter so extreme,
That I awoke—and, lo! it was *no* dream!"

Sir William Curtis, if not like Falstaff, witty himself, at least resembles him in being the *cause* of wit in other people. But enough of *him.*

The following tale, or allegory, is said to have sprung from consideration on the nature and object of the foregoing congress, and to have been told by Lord Byron one evening, when in serious conversation with another English gentleman at Pisa, on the subject of the political state of their native country, and of the danger of the present tranquillity of Europe being disturbed by the Quixote-like enterprizes of the members of the *Holy Alliance.* The person to whom it was told, could not ascertain whether the tale had been previously composed, or was delivered *impromptu;* but he rather inclined to the latter opinion:

THE FOUR BARBERS OF BAGDAT.

An Oriental Allegory, by Lord Byron.

There were once *four barbers* in the city of Bagdat, who had the sole privilege and prerogative of handling the heads of all the inhabitants of that ancient city. Each one had his district, or peculiar province, over which he reigned *legitimate* sovereign, and ruled the heads of hair, beards, and mustachios, with despotic sway. One shaved only the crown of the head; another cropped the hinder part; a third shaved off the mustachios, and left the beard flowing; the fourth shaved off the beard, and let the mustachios arrive to as luxuriant a growth as possible. Each one was bigotted to his own mode, and the customers of each, following the example of their respective leaders, became equally bigotted; the persons of one class praised their own mode, and ridiculed those of the others; so that each of the four classes was always jeered at by the three others. As jokes (particularly with ignorant and vulgar people) seldom fail to end in earnest, so it happened with the good folks of Bagdat. From jeering and bantering, the four classes came to reviling, despising, hating, and at length even to fisty-cuffs and daggers-drawing with each other. A civil war soon raged, for no more important reason than about shaven crowns, cropped heads, beards, and mustachios. To heighten the confusion, and increase the party rage, *religion* was

called in to add to the flame; each particular class asserting that its own mode was of divine origin, and, consequently, most agreeable to heaven; and, going on from point to point, from one degree of phrenzy to another; it was, at length, made a *state affair*, each class arrogating to itself exclusive loyalty and patriotism, and branding all the others as irreligious, disloyal, and rebellious. To such a pitch of infatuation will "*trifles light as air*" at the onset, arrive in progress of time, when men lose sight of their true guides—reason and common sense! Matters grew to such a height, that it at length became unsafe for any one of either class to venture into the quarters inhabited by any of the others, where he was sure to be hissed, hooted at, and pelted, before he could effect his escape—perhaps murdered. All trade and commerce was nearly at an end, and the whole business of the *wise folks* of Bagdat seemed to be only that of annoying and destroying each other. All Bagdat was infected with this *Barbero-mania*, except one man, who, because he avoided all serious business whatever, and solely employed himself in ridiculing and bantering the follies of others, was deemed by all an *idiot;* and that was the only opinion in which the good folks of Bagdat were unanimous. Shielded by this character, which, throughout the east, is regarded as being under the immediate divine protection, and, consequently, sacred among men,

he alone could traverse all the four quarters of the city, and say and do whatever he thought proper, with impunity. He ridiculed incessantly all the four contending parties, and the only notice they took of it was to exclaim—"*it is only a fool!*" Things went on for a length of time, until the contending parties had well worried each other, and nearly worried themselves out. The fool, seeing the time was come, then proposed to each, separately, an accommodation, and promised to bring it about if a certain number of the heads of each party would only agree to assemble together, and bind themselves by a solemn promise to abide by his decision. The proposition seemed to the wearied inhabitants to come immediately from Heaven, and through the Divine inspiration, and the *wise* men of Bagdat all exclaimed, in the words of an ancient maxim: "*let us take the advice of a fool!*"—Accordingly, at a time and place fixed, the heads of the parties assembled together, and took the required adjuration. That done in due form, the *fool* addressed them thus: "my very *wise* and good brethren, you are quarrelling and fighting, and knocking each other on the head for shaven crowns, cropped heads, beards, and mustachios! you make it a matter of religion and state; but it is neither the one nor the other; Heaven and the state have nothing at all to do with the question, as you would have known, if you had only been blessed with the small share of sense

that falls to the lot of a *fool.* This is my decision: let every one in future follow his own taste and will, and leave the others to do the same. If the *four barbers of Bagdat,* who first kindled and threw the firebrand of discord amongst you, refuse to perform their functions for the *public good,* and to the liking of the whole community, you must join together, and compel them to perform their duties; if they still prove refractory and refuse to do so, kick them out of the city of Bagdat, rather than suffer its tranquillity to be any longer destroyed by *four impertinent shavers.*" The light of reason instantly broke in upon the whole assembly, who, laughing at their former folly, shook hands cordially together, and exclaimed: "*the* FOOL *is right; let us take his advice.*" They did so; the *four* refractory *barbers* were either obliged to conform to the will of the community, or were expelled the city; and *Bagdat* again resumed its peace and prosperity.

The animosity which the *British Peer* and *Poet* entertained towards the domineering dogmas of the members of the *Holy Alliance,* was founded on sound sense, pure philanthropy, and unshaken patriotism; and, as such, ought to be imitated not only by every true Briton, but by every man in the universe, who wishes to enjoy a rational state of freedom, and to see an unrestrained intercourse arise between every part of it. Of the

injurious tendency of its principles on the commerce, trade and manufactures of this country, every man may be instantly convinced, on an inspection of the list of exports to foreign parts. It is by the reciprocation of industry, and the exchange of the produce of different countries, that kingdoms prosper, by getting rid of their superfluities and gaining necessaries in return; and that the wheel of commerce goes round, scattering plenty on all sides, and benefiting all parties; besides the interchange of civilities and friendly intercourse, and the promotion of knowledge and the arts of civilization.

In looking at the markets, in which there exists the briskest demand for the leading articles of British manufactures, for iron, cotton, silk, woollen-goods, &c. &c., we find that full three parts out of four are consumed, or, at least, taken off our hands by the *free* cities in Germany. This proves, undeniably, that trade is no where so active as in *free* countries, and that demand and consumption are restricted or prohibited or annihilated, in those countries which are cursed with the continental *legitimate* system.

This continental system, therefore, must be repugnant to the welfare of mankind, and it must be a matter of infinite regret that the late Marquis of Londonderry should have committed so great a political oversight, as not to have stipulated for the constitution of more of those *free* cities, when

the whole fate of Europe was in his hands at the congress of Verona, and he might have conferred happiness on millions. How greatly, for instance, would he have added to the commerce of this country, if he had rendered Genoa, Dantzic, and Venice *free* cities, like Hamburgh and Leghorn! But *Byron* has told the truth. Londonderry was unquestionably over-reached, or flattered, or *prevailed* upon by the Austrian minister; he was naturally too much of the *courtier*, and was, unfortunately for himself and for his country, and for the world at large, too much swayed by this predominant cast of character. "Quand les sauvages de la Louisiane (says Montesquieu) veulent avoir du fruit, ils coupent l'arbre au pied, et cueillent le fruit. Voilà le gouvernement despotique."—(*Esprit des Lois*, l. v, ch. 13.) The *wisdom* of savages indeed! It is impossible to be mistaken in the facts: the places themselves bear incontestable marks of this political difference. In traversing the northern part of Italy, where the iron despotism of Austria depresses human industry, we see the decay of trade and commerce, through the rigorous prohibition and exclusion of British goods, and the consequent loss of interchange of native produce. Thus Venice is extinguished, and Genoa is become palsied and lifeless; Milan pines in morbid insignificance, whilst Leghorn and Florence (*free cities*) are active, vigorous, and wealthy! —This fact cannot escape the penetration of

the present intelligent members of the British ministry.

Lord Byron was every inch an Englishman; a true-born Briton, of so patriotic a spirit that he hated those who brought disgrace and ruin upon the insulted and devoted head of his country, in mere compliment or base compliance with the will of foreign despots. He had had ocular demonstration of the ruin which had been brought upon poor, deluded Greece; deluded under the specious mask of religion and friendship, by Russia, when those who came under pretence of liberating her from Turkish thraldom, wasted the country, plundered the men, and ravished the women;* in so much that the Greeks preferred the claw of the Tartar savage to the *paternal* hug of the Russian bear. From the dreadful struggle of the last three years this blessing at last has resulted, that the Greeks need no longer be in any manner of doubt as to the policy of Russia; they now know it to be selfish, unprincipled, and fatal. She will not be a fourth time duped and deserted. It is no small cause of joy to the lovers of truth, freedom, and Britain, those sacred names which should never be separated, that the northern autocrat

* "While we hoped," says a Greek writer, "that the days of our ancient liberty were about to regain their splendour, our houses were set on fire, our daughters were ravished, by the very soldiers who came to defend our country, and unhappy Greece felt only the weight of her chains increased."

has, by dint of too much finesse and low cunning, suffered his once willing prey to escape through his fingers, and that the views which he had upon Turkey are all destroyed by his base desertion of Greece.

Lord Byron never ceased to instil into the Greeks the maxim of conquering for themselves and not for others, according to Virgil:

"Sic vos, non vobis, mellificatis apes."

He forewarned them that the congress of Verona was inimical to Greece as well as to Italy, and it was always his most strenuous advice to the Greeks to depend solely on themselves; but, if possible, to keep well with all nations, particularly to conciliate Great Britain; but on no account to enlist themselves again under the banners of the Northern Autocrat. In so doing, Lord Byron not only repaid the Emperor of Russia for all favours conferred upon him and his friends in Pisa, but served the cause both of his own country and his beloved Greece. Lord Byron has done as much to destroy the ascendancy of Russia over the Greek councils, as to render them fearless of their Turkish enslavers.

Having thus for a time quitted scores with the Holy Alliance, his Lordship resumed his labours. "*The Island, or Christian and his Comrades,*" a story, founded on the mutiny on board his Majesty's ship *Bounty*, next occupied the leisure hours

of Lord Byron, and sufficiently refuted the assertion that his talent was confined to the description of one particular cast of characters, such as *Childe Harold, Lara, Alp, Conrad,* and that he could not get out of his beaten track. The story is of so recent a date, that a very short sketch will suffice for the information of those who have not read the account. Captain Bligh was despatched to Otaheité, to procure plants of the bread fruit, and other trees, in order to try the experiment of naturalizing them in the West India Islands, to render the supply less precarious and dependent on the United States of North America. The outward-bound voyage was prosperous. They reached Otaheité on the 25th Sept. 1788, collected their cargo, and on the 4th April 1789, set sail on their middle passage, after twenty-three weeks' communication with the natives, during which they had been treated with the utmost affection and regard, which seemed to increase in proportion to their stay. That they were not insensible to their kindness the succeeding circumstances sufficiently proved; for to the friendly and endearing behaviour of these people may be ascribed the motives inciting an event that effected the ruin of the expedition, which there was every reason to believe would have been attended with the most favourable and beneficial issue. On Tuesday, the 28th April, the mutiny broke out, and Captain Bligh and eighteen of the crew were forced into

the ship's launch, and set adrift. Through Divine Providence they reached the island of Tofoa, then ten leagues distant, and thence contrived to get to England. Fletcher, *Christian* (the ringleader), and twenty-four other mutineers then returned to Otaheité, to enjoy their former pleasures, which had occasioned so much intoxication and infatuation. The women of Otaheité are handsome, mild, and cheerful, in manners and conversation; possessed of great sensibility, and have sufficient delicacy to make them be admired and beloved. The chiefs were so much attached to the English people, that they rather encouraged their stay among them than otherwise, and even made them promises of large possessions. Under these, and many other concomitant circumstances, it ought hardly to be the subject of surprise that a set of sailors, most of them void of connexions, should be led away, when they had the power of fixing themselves in the midst of plenty, in one of the finest islands in the world, where there was no necessity to labour, and where the allurements of dissipation are beyond any conception that can be formed of it.

The first canto opens with the morning watch on board the vessel at sea, and the scene of the mutiny is accurately described from the narrative. The second canto opens with a song of the Tonga Islanders, a description of the climate and manners of the natives, and then discovers *Torquil*, a

truant mutineer, sitting with his new wife, *Neuha*, by his side :

> " Rapt in the fond forgetfulness of life,
> Neuha, the South sea girl, was all a wife,
> With no distracting world to call her off
> From love ; with no society to scoff
> At the new transient flame ; no babbling crowd
> Of coxcombry in admiration loud,
> Or with adulterous whisper to alloy
> Her duty, and her glory, and her joy ;
> With faith and feelings naked as her form,
> She stood as stands a rainbow in a storm,
> Changing its hues with bright variety,
> But still expanding lovelier o'er the sky,
> Howe'er its arch may swell, its colours move,
> The cloud-compelling harbinger of love."

This love-scene is interrupted by a whistle, a *hillo*, and the scent of tobacco which precede Ben Bunting, another mutineer, who announces that there is a strange sail in the offing ; that Christian had piped all hands to quarters ; that his comrades are furbishing their arms, and getting some great guns to bear, and lastly, that Torquil is wanted to bear a hand for their mutual defence.

The opening of the third canto announces that the fight is over, and the mutineers slain, taken, or dispersed, and the latter hunted over the isle like wild beasts. Christian and three survivors are collected together in despair, and unable to form any plan of safety. Some canoes appear in sight. Neuha lands and joins her dear Torquil. The

hostile armed boats also appear in pursuit. Neuha and Torquil embark in one canoe, and Christian and two others in another, and sail away, pursued by the armed boats. Canto fourth opens with a description of a desart rock, not far from Toboonai, rising precipitous from the ocean, like a wall. Here the canoes divide, Neuha bidding Christian and his comrades to make the best of their way, while they attract the notice of their pursuers. She paddles to the rock, which seemingly forbids all nearer access, and denies flight. The pursuers come almost within grasp, when Neuha, bidding Torquil follow her, plunges into the sea, and dives out of sight. Torquil follows, and disappears too. The pursuers, thinking them both drowned, sail away after the other fugitives. Neuha and Torquil, drawn in by a current, rise again in a spacious cave, a hollow archway, where, foreseeing the probability of pursuit, she had provided every thing for an emergency. The armed boats drive Christian and his comrades to another rock, where they land, and, taking their stands on the least accessible crags, prepare for a desperate defence. They are hailed to surrender, but preserve a sullen silence. The fight begins, several of the assailants are killed, and at last all the three mutineers fall, Christian last, twice wounded. In this state, having fired away the only ball he had left, he loads with a waistcoat button, kills his man with it, and throwing himself down the preci-

piece, is dashed to pieces. The ensuing calm is beautifully described, and evinces the author's general talents:

"The deed was over! All were gone or ta'en,
The fugitive, the captive, or the slain.
Chain'd on the deck, where once, a gallant crew,
They stood with honour, were the wretched few
Survivors of the skirmish on the isle;
But the last rock left no surviving spoil.
Cold lay they where they fell, and weltering,
While o'er them flapped the sea-birds' dewy wing,
Now wheeling nearer from the neighbouring surge,
And screaming high their harsh and hungry dirge:
But calm and careless heav'd the wave below,
Eternal with unsympathetic flow;
Far o'er its face the dolphins sported on,
And sprung the flying fish against the sun,
Till its dried wing relaps'd from its brief height,
To gather moisture for another flight."

Next morn, Neuha swims out of her recess, to see what was going forward, and discovers the hostile ship under sail. She returns to her lover, and rejoices him with the tidings. They return to their companions, who receive them with every demonstration of joy:

"An hundred fires, far flickering from the height,
Blaz'd o'er the general revel of the night,
The feast in honour of the guest, return'd
To peace and pleasure, perilously earn'd;
A night succeeded by such happy days
As only yet the infant world displays."

This is a sweet poem, and, in every respect, unobjectionable, even by the most fastidious criticism. It is given in such an easy flowing tone, as shews that its author was perfectly at home, with his subject fully before him, and not labouring to broach, or to maintain, any metaphysical or abstract reasoning on doubtful subjects. The writer and the reader seem taking a pleasant excursion hand in hand together, and take leave of each other at the end of their walk, well pleased, and with regret.

In addition to the beauty of the poetry, the expression of character, the elegance of the descriptions, and the variety of imagery, there is a degree of truth that pervades every part of this well known story, and enraptures the reader. Every thing passes in review before his mind's eye; the delights, both of the country and the enchanting and endearing manners of the natives, which seduced our rough, unthinking tars, as well as the subsequent horrors and punishment that awaited their flagrant crime. It is a true picture of nature, set off with the most beautiful colours of light and shade.

Had the life of such a writer been spared; had he been permitted to live to contribute, by his sword, to the freedom of his beloved Greece, as well as to have celebrated her victories by his pen, what an immortal work might have been

expected from him! The *English Homer*, or *Pindar* of the present day, might have rivalled the *Grecian Homer*, or *Pindar*, of ages long since past. But his race was run, and nobly ended. It has been well observed that there are some men who, in a few years of devoted usefulness and energetic perseverance, contrive to *live longer*, at least to do more, in a short space of time, than many who take the full span of three-score years and ten in crawling from the cradle to the grave. Death could not have surprised our noble author; well might such a man, who had lived as he had done, when he received the summons, exclaim, as he did, in the humble tone of piety and resignation, "*Not mine, but God's will be done!*"

Lord Byron's attachment to the drama still continued undiminished, notwithstanding his failure, and in February 1822, there appeared "*Werner*," a tragedy, taken, as the preface announces, from the "*German Tale, Kruitzner*," published many years ago in "*Lee's Canterbury Tales.*" "I have adopted (says his Lordship) the characters, plan, and even the language of many parts of this story. Some of the characters are modified or altered, a few of the names changed, and one character (Ida of Stralenheim) added by myself; but in the rest the original is chiefly followed. When I was young (about fourteen, I think) I

first read this tale, which made a deep impression on me; and may, indeed, be said to *contain the germ of much that I have since written* (so much the worse for his Lordship's fame and the public gratification). I am not sure that it ever was very popular, or, at any rate, its popularity has since been eclipsed by that of other great writers in the same department. But I have generally found that those who *had* read it, agreed with me in their estimate of the singular power of mind and conception which it developes. I should also add *conception*, rather than execution, for the story might, perhaps, have been more developed with greater advantage."

One other remarkable circumstance is brought to light in this Preface, namely, the very early age at which Lord Byron entered the lists as a *dramatic* writer. "I had begun (adds his Lordship) a drama upon this tale as far back as 1815 (the first I ever attempted, except one at *thirteen*, "*Ulric and Ilvira*," which I had sense enough to burn), and had nearly completed an act, when I was interrupted by circumstances. This is somewhere amongst my papers in England; but as it has not been found I have re-written the first, and added the subsequent acts. The whole is neither intended, nor in any shape adapted for the stage."

The story is as follows: the son of Baron Siegendorf makes a *left-handed* match,* against the approbation of his father, and is discarded by him. He becomes a wanderer, with his wife Josephine, and is pursued and persecuted by Stralenheim, a relation, who endeavours to get him into his power, to put him out of the way and enjoy the barony. The old Baron Siegendorf dies, and his grandson Ulric, whom he had brought up, flying from the machinations of Stralenheim, associates himself with the black band of robbers. The piece at opening discovers Siegendorf (under the assumed name of Werner), and his wife Josephine, taking refuge in an old ruinous castle, part of his own domain, where Stralenheim is brought in, having been rescued from drowning by the flooding of a river, through the caution of Ulric and Gabor, who were accidentally passing at the time. Stralenheim suspects the identity of Werner, with whom he is not personally acquainted, and dispatches messengers for assistance to get him arrested. Werner discovers his intentions, and plunders him whilst sleeping of 100 ducats, to assist him in his flight. Stralenheim is finally murdered in his bed by some unknown person, and Werner then discovers himself, and takes possession of his barony. Ulric, his now acknow-

* In Germany, if a nobleman weds an inferior, he espouses her with his *left hand;* the marriage is legal, and the children legitimate, but they cannot inherit the family honours.

ledged son and heir, is about to be married to Ida (Stralenheim's daughter); but he seems to suffer some extraordinary agitation, the cause of which is not suspected, until Gabor, who has been accused of Stralenheim's murder, appears before Siegendorf, and challenges Ulric as not only being the perpetrator of the crime, but also of being leagued with the black band of banditti. Ulric at first stoutly denies, but at length confesses his guilt, and determines to put Gabor out of the way. This design is prevented by Siegendorf, who gives some jewels to Gabor, and hastens his flight. Ulric, finding his revenge disappointed, quits his father in a rage, declaring his resolution of rejoining his former associates. Ida, being informed that Ulric, whom she loves, is the assassin of her father, falls down senseless, and the piece concludes with Werner's observation, that "*the race of Siegendorf is past!*"

This piece has all the faults of the German model, and consequently is utterly repugnant both to the taste and morality of a British audience. It is devoid of every kind of interest and sympathy which such exhibitions ought to excite, Werner being, through misfortune and persecution, steeled against every human feeling, even those ties which are most dear to the human heart. Josephine is an obedient and affectionate wife, and the only tolerable character throughout the piece. Ulric is a perfect monster. He affects

to think his father dishonoured by taking a trifling sum to aid his flight from his mortal enemy and persecutor, at the same time that he himself is a common robber. He even pretends to doubt his father's being guilty of the murder of Stralenheim, which his own hand had perpetrated. His villainy is only to be equalled by his hypocrisy. If Siegendorf had not descended to the meanness of plundering his foe whilst sleeping, his character had been untainted; and if Stralenheim had fallen by any other hand than Ulric's, the house of Siegendorf would have been restored to its lawful possessions with purity, and the morality of fiction would have been preserved. It is evident, therefore, that the plot, such as it is, has been most unskilfully handled, by too strict an adherence to the German original, of which Lord Byron expresses his own sense in the preface. The dramas of *Schiller* were formed upon a bad model, and British sense and British taste were captivated and vitiated by the German originals.

It is truly lamentable to see a man thus throw away the most splendid talents on unsuitable subjects. If ever there was an English writer who might have ranked next to Shakespeare, it was Byron; but Byron would submit his own judgment to no tribunal on earth. The public must stoop to him—he would stoop to no one; and the consequence was, that the stage was deprived of the efforts of a man who might have

proved one of its brightest and most lasting ornaments. His powers of invention—his command of diction—his knowledge of human nature—his ability to delineate and distinguish character—and his acquaintance with stage effect, no man can doubt, and no other requisite was wanting to make a first-rate dramatist; but Byron deemed the world made for himself, and not himself for the world. Combining a portion of the majesty of Shakespeare, with the pathos of Otway, and the force of Massinger, the world perceives what Byron might have performed. His performances might have delighted us on the *stage* as well as in the *closet*. Why had not some friend impressed upon his mind, that Shakespeare himself conceded to popular prejudices; and that no writer could be disgraced by following the example of Terence, who boasted of the pains he took:

> "*Populo ut placerent, quas fecisset fabulas!*"
>
> Ter. Andria. Prol.

The literary world was at length given to understand, that the same poetical subject was about to be treated by the two greatest English poets, and the highest expectations were formed; the subject being rather a *ticklish one* (the "*Loves of the Angels*"), and both bards remarkable for being not over nice in their attention to common punctilio: but to their great surprise and no little gratifica-

tion, Mr. Thomas Moore got over such slippery ground without a slip; and his friend, Lord Byron, made good his footing without a trip; which are not the two least remarkable circumstances in the year's occurrences. But although there could be no fault found with the execution, the choice of a foundation from the old Rabbinical tales has been much disapproved; and indeed, whenever the Parnassian gentry call for their winged Pegasus, and set out upon their ærial and supernatural flights, as much doubt may be entertained of their safety, as for their continuing in sight of men of clear judgment and good understanding; for getting once aloft, and rather more indistinct, they begin, like æronauts in a balloon, to wave their flags, and cut strange capers, until they sail behind some cloud, and thus vanish away. It is just so in the present case; we are charmed with the poetry, which insensibly lures us on, hoping to come to some understanding of the matter, until we arrive at the end, and then very naturally turn round upon ourselves, and ask "What is it all about?" A story without beginning, middle, or end; an opera-house concerto, which tickles the ear while it lasts, and the instant it is ended, leaves not a single impression or pleasing remembrance behind. It is a false taste, a *Baviad* and *Mæviad* style, which should be discountenanced. If Shakespeare made use of supernatural machinery, he only fell in with the popular superstitions

and belief of the vulgar; and then only as an auxiliary to his subject, never as the main prop of foundation. The two poems before us having no plot, no necessary connexion of parts, no catastrophe, nothing savouring of dull mortality, it would be ridiculous to attempt any thing like a critique on what defies all criticism, or even description. All that can be done, or indeed expected, is to give a specimen of each, *pars pro toto*, and to leave the reader to his own judgment:

Mr. MOORE. *(First Angel's Story.)*

" Pausing in wonder, I look'd on,
While playfully around her breaking
The waters, that like diamonds shone,
She mov'd in light of her own making.
At length, as slowly I descended
To view more near a sight so splendid,
The tremble of my wings all o'er
(For through each plume I felt the thrill)
Startled her as she reach'd the shore
Of that small lake—her mirror still—
Above whose brink she stood, like snow
When rosy with a sun-set glow.
Never shall I forget those eyes!
The shame, the innocent surprise
Of that bright face, when in the air
Uplooking she beheld me there.
It seem'd as if each thought and look,
And motion were that minute chain'd
Fast to the spot, such root she took,
And—like a sun-flow'r by the brook,
With face upturn'd—so still remain'd."

Beautiful! But now, who does not remember a similar scene in "*Thomson's Seasons,*" where Musidora, a nymph, is surprised bathing, by Damon, her swain? And who that has read Thomson's description will ever forget it? and who that reads the above one of Mr. Moore, will ever remember it? If this be the *new school,* give us the *old one.* We will never give up our own little sense in compliment to the vitiated taste of such an academy. The poetry of the present age, compared with that of the past, is like silk spun from cobwebs—a blast of wind and good bye! Let every one enjoy his own opinion—this is ours.

Lord Byron's taste led him to dramatize his subject, and he makes a *mystery* of it, when all the rest of the world has discarded mysteries, probably from his love of eccentricity. We think him rather less successful than his friend Mr. Moore. There are, however, many beautiful, some sublime passages in "*Heaven and Earth.*"

> "Ye wilds, that look eternal; and thou cave,
> Which seem'st unfathomable; and ye mountains,
> So varied, and so terrible in beauty;
> Here, in your rugged majesty of rocks
> And toppling trees that twine their roots with stone
> In perpendicular places, where the foot
> Of man would tremble, could he reach them, yes,
> Ye look eternal! Yet, in a few days,
> Perhaps even hours, ye will be chang'd, rent, hurl'd,
> Before the mass of waters; and yon cave,
> Which seems to lead into a lower world,

> Shall have its depths search'd by the sweeping grave,
> And dolphins gambol in the lion's den!
> And man!—

—"Man dieth," says Solomon, "and where is he?" Lord Byron announced that a second part of the dramatic mystery was intended shortly to appear—and, alas! *where is he?*

Another unfinished drama has been lately added to Lord Byron's list, entitled "*The Deformed Transformed,*" of which he gives the following account: "This production is founded partly on the story of a novel called '*The Three Brothers,*' published many years ago, from which M. G. Lewis's '*Wood Demon*' was also taken, and partly on the '*Faust*' of the great Goëthe. The present publication contains the two first parts only, and the opening chorus of the third. The rest may, perhaps, appear hereafter."

The first scene is in a forest, where Bertha reproaches her son Arnold with his hunch-backed deformity, and bids him leave her sight. After she is gone, he follows his usual avocation of wood-cutting, and happens to wound himself. He goes to a fountain to wash away the blood, and seeing his own deformity, he sticks his knife into the ground, and is going to throw himself upon it, when he perceives a rippling in the water, which arrests his attention. A demon arises, taunts his *cloven-footed* deformity, and demands whether he would wish to change his shape. After some hag-

gling about conditions, a bargain is struck; the demon takes some of his blood, sprinkles it in the stream, and delivers an incantation. Various shapes appear—Julius Cæsar, Alcibiades, Socrates, Anthony, Demetrius Poliorcetes, and lastly Achilles, on which Arnold fixes, then falls into a swoon, while his soul passes into the form of Achilles. The demon takes Arnold's shape, and, having provided two pages and four coal-black coursers, they set off together towards Rome, the devil assuming the name of Cæsar, and Arnold being dubbed a count. The next scene is a camp before the walls of Rome, where, in a conference between the demon and Arnold, we are informed that Arnold has signalized his courage, and is become a free companion of Bourbon, late constable of France. They already begin to revile each other, when the constable and Philibert enter, and the demon lets loose his sarcastic ridicule upon them all, which is overlooked in consideration of the exploits they have performed. The assault is fixed for the next break of day, and all go off but the demon, who indulges in a soliloquy:

> ——————— "And these are men, forsooth!
> Heroes and chiefs, the flow'rs of Adam's bastards!
> This is the consequence of giving matter
> The power of thought. It is a stubborn substance,
> And thinks chaotically, as it acts,
> Ever relapsing into its first elements.
> Well! I must play with these poor puppets: 'tis
> The spirit's pastime in his idler hours.

When I grow weary with it, I have business
Amongst the stars, which these poor creatures deem
Were made for them to look at. 'Twere a jest now
To bring one down amongst them, and set fire
Unto their ant hill: how the pismires then
Would scamper o'er the scalding soil, and, ceasing
From tearing down each others' nests, pipe forth
One universal orison! Ha! ha!"—

Part II. Scene 1. The preparations for the assault, which Bourbon leads. Chorus of Spirits in the air. Bourbon mounts the ramparts, and is beat down by a shot. Arnold covers the body with a mantle, and mounts the ladder; he and the demon are both struck down, but get up, remount the ladder, and enter the city. Combats take place in the streets, between Papists, Lutherans, &c. &c. Arnold engages a Roman, whom the demon announces as a cunning sculptor, a dealer in sword and dagger, one *Benvenuto Cellini*, who had slain the constable. Arnold says that he has carved his own monument; but Benvenuto replies, that he hopes to live to carve Arnold's. They fight; Arnold disarms Cellini, who draws a pistol, fires, wounds Arnold, and flies. The demon bandages his wound; they renew the fight, and the scene closes. The next scene is the interior of St. Peter's church. Pope at the altar. Citizens flying, pursued by Spanish and Lutheran soldiers. One of the latter, attempting to kill the Pope, is shot by one of the Pope's guards. Whilst they are fighting, the demon jeers at both parties:

"Ha! right nobly battled!
Now, priest! now, soldier! the two great professions,
Together by the ears and hearts! I have not
Seen a more comic pantomime since Titus
Took Jewry. But the Romans had the best then;
Now they must take their turn."

Olimpia flying to the altar, the soldiers quarrel for her, and one going to seize her as she clasps a massive crucifix, she lets it fall, and crushes him. Arnold enters, and reproving the soldiers, one of them grumbles; he cuts him down, and they all assault him. He mows down several more, and the rest cry for mercy. He strives to console Olimpia, who reproaches him with her country's ruin, and throws herself off the altar on the pavement. The demon enters, and helps Arnold to bear her away. Part III. opens with a castle in the Appenines. Chorus of peasants.

This drama (like the originals from which it is professedly taken) is merely a vehicle through which the demon is made to throw off his sarcastic abuse on mankind, and on their ambition, vanity, avarice, cruelty, lust, and religious disputes. Catholics and Lutherans are represented as quarrelling with each other, whilst mutually engaged in pulling down the Pope; and when Olimpia appears dying, and Arnold asks the demon if he can aid her, he maliciously says he will try if a sprinkling of the *holy water* will be useful. The piece is merely the old vehicle of Dr. Faust, well known

in Germany, France, and throughout the continent, wrought into a dramatic shape, and there is not, as in all the author's other works, a sprinkling of fine passages, here and there, to encourage the reader. Olimpia, the only character in the piece from whom any thing might be expected, uttering only a few short sentences with the spirit of a Roman heroine.

It is singular that Lord Byron here, as in almost the whole of his works, should have given a handle to the public to deem him the hero of his tale. Arnold is reproached by his mother for his deformity, and driven from her, and even the devil twits him with being *club-footed*,* which renders him dissatisfied with himself and with all mankind, and the willing associate of a demon. With so many and unexpected blessings, too, there was a drawback; his *body* was not so *well-gifted* as his *mind*. Thence sprang his first and keenest disappointment—a disappointment of the heart, which poisoned the whole stream of life, from its source to its being lost in the fathomless gulph. This was the real

* The very same tone pervades almost the whole of Lord Byron's works. In *Don Juan*, where he describes the assault on Ismail, and the slaughter of the Turkish Pacha, and his sons, one of them is described as being *deformed*, yet fighting bravely before the eyes of, and sacrificing his life for, a father, who disliked him on account of his *deformity*. It must have been a thorn, that never was eradicated from the side of the querulous poet! The bolt was so often shot, that it is impossible to mistake the mark.

cause of all his Lordship's aberrations and irregularities, which even marriage, and the possession of a *virtuous* and *amiable* wife, could not cure.

Having thus gone through the poetical labours of Lord Byron, (for "*The Deformed Transformed*" was the last production of his pen,) it will be proper to state what has transpired respecting the vast sums of money which were paid for the copyright of his numerous works. On this subject there is such a steady light thrown, as will obviate scepticism, and place his Lordship's disinterestedness and generosity beyond all manner of doubt.

By an affidavit filed in the Court of Chancery, it appears that Mr. Murray had paid to Lord Byron *five thousand pounds*, for the copyright of various poems, of which two thousand pounds were given for the third canto of "*Childe Harold*," "The Prisoner of Chillon," "A Dream," and other poems. The "*Childe Harold*," contains 118 stanzas, which were paid for at the rate of upwards of ten pounds a stanza, and more than a guinea per line! In the European Magazine for 1814, there is a letter of Mr. R. C. Dallas, in answer to an assertion contained in an evening newspaper, that Lord Byron received and pocketted large sums for his books; in contradiction to which assertion Mr. Dallas states that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works.

"To my certain knowledge," he says, "the profits of 'The Satire' were left entirely to the publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of '*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*' I have already publicly acknowledged, and I now add my acknowledgment for that of '*The Corsair.*' With respect to his two other poems, '*The Giaour*' and '*The Bride of Abydos,*' Mr. Murray can truly attest that no part of the sale of those works have ever touched his Lordship's hands, or been disposed of for his use." Although by the above affidavit it appears that large sums of money were actually paid by Mr. Murray for Lord Byron's productions, yet, as Mr. Dallas justly observes, "neither rank nor fortune seems to me to place any man above this; for what difference does it make in honour and noble feelings, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its value employed in beneficent purposes?"

Mr. Dallas is undoubtedly right here: there is a degree of cruelty in noble and gentlemanly writers bestowing their works *gratuitously* on publishers: the productions of many of the most celebrated (though needy) authors thus would be refused, and daily suffer that fate, to make way for it might be the *gratuitous* trash. Every man, however wealthy, should exact a fair remuneration for his labours, as there are objects enough for his bounty to be found in every part of the world. Such conduct is at once just, gene-

rous, and noble; and that such was the conduct pursued by Lord Byron sufficient instances have been given, besides the acknowledgments of Mr. Dallas, Mr. Moore, &c. &c. How he has been requited, it is for those gentlemen to answer,—the one in destroying the Memoirs intrusted to his hands for publication! the other for attempting to publish private correspondence left with him to be kept sacred from all the world!

Mr. Dallas has been restrained, by an injunction of the Court of Chancery, from publishing Lord Byron's confidential correspondence in England, and he has transmitted it to Mr. Galignani at Paris, who is now printing these suppressed letters in French and English, with a superb portrait of his Lordship, engraved in London, as an embellishment to the first volume. The public will soon be able to judge, whether the publication contains any *manufactured* correspondence, which would injure his Lordship's reputation in more than one sense.

If the *jeu d'esprit*, which has been handed about, be really the production of Lord Byron, his Lordship had no great opinion of Mr. Dallas's intellectual faculties. A person observing that Mr. Dallas looked very wise on a certain occasion, his Lordship is said to have broken out into the following impromptu:

"Yes! wisdom shines in all his mien—
Which would so captivate, I ween,
Wisdom's own goddess, Pallas;
That she'd discard her fav'rite owl,
And take for pet a brother fowl,
Sagacious R. C. Dallas."

On the subject of the *injunction*, the Lord Chancellor has shown his usual discrimination and knowledge of the *law of equity*. The correspondence was not between Lord Byron and Mr. Dallas, or the latter could not have been restrained from publishing that which was addressed to himself, with an implied freedom of making what use of it he pleased; it was only a *trust*, to be resumed at the pleasure of Lord Byron, and the *power* of *resumption*, on his decease, became vested by his will in his executors, who very properly interfered to restrain Mr. Dallas from making an advantage of that over which he never had any right. The present Lord Chancellor may be slow, but he is sure; and there never was one in that high and arduous situation whose decisions gave more general satisfaction. He might justly have assumed for his motto—"*Non celeriter sed certe.*"

On the subject of "*Lord Byron's Memoirs of his own Life and Times*," it has been said that, in that curious and lamented work, the noble author had spoken both of himself and others with much candour, strictness, and impartiality. As to what has been further reported on that subject, we know

not what degree of credit to attach to it; but we have heard it rumoured that there were more manuscript copies than one of it, and that there is one, in particular, in *Paris;* and that, some few years hence, it is probable that the world may be favoured with this eccentric and valuable production!

For the present, it will be some satisfaction to the public to know, that Byron's "*Memoirs of his own Life and Times*" were perused by many persons, amongst several of whom an inquiry has been instituted and persevered in, and that there have been obtained from two of those persons all the most prominent circumstances that they could commit to their memories; and that the purport, at least, if not the very words of the noble author, will be found in the subsequent pages. If, therefore, the *Memoirs* should not be hereafter given to the world, in a mutilated or unmutilated state, yet the loss will not be so very material, as they will have the substance, and those parts only will be suppressed which it may be as well, or better, perhaps, to keep from the public eye. In this respect, we shall deem it our indispensable duty to consider private feelings, as well as to gratify public curiosity. It will be a delicate task, and if there should be some flaws, the reader will only have the kindness to reflect that there is no such thing as perfection in human nature. It is a portrait from real life, and not that of a hero of romance, that we are about to design; we must,

therefore, stick to the original, and an original Byron was, if ever there was one in the world.

Lord Byron's *private journal* has also been spoken of, by those who have been favoured with a sight of it, as being a very correct and elegant composition; his Lordship, however, according to the resolution expressed in the latter part of his "*Scotch Reviewers and English Bards,*" has withheld it from the public, or rather, we suppose, these are amongst the papers which were thrown overboard by Count Gamba, when captured by a Turkish frigate, as mentioned in another part of this work.

The fate of Lord Byron's writings displays the proper spirit of the world; it is unthankful, or ungrateful, for what it has received, and yet affects to regret that which is lost or kept back from it: "*Sic est vulgus; ex veritate pauca, ex opinione multa, æstimat.*"—Cicero.

CHAPTER VI.

Singular occurrence that took place at Pisa.—Sketch of the extraordinary Life of the late P. B. Shelley, Esq.—The finding his corpse, and the ceremony of burning it on a pile, after the old Roman fashion, for the purpose of depositing the ashes in Rome.—Lord Byron's establishment at Pisa.—His attachment to monkies and other animals.—His regimen.—Pistol-practice.—Duelling.—The Guiccioli.—Fletcher's *bon mot*.—The Circle at Pisa.—The Gambas and Lord Byron driven from Venice and Ravenna by the Holy Alliance.—Persecuted in a similar manner at Pisa.—Official account of the affray at Pisa, that ended in the banishment of some, and the removal of the rest of Byron's friends to Genoa.

Before we take leave of Pisa, it would be unpardonable to omit another singular affair, in which Lord Byron and his friends bore a conspicuous part. The loss of Mr. P. B. Shelley, who was drowned on his return to Pisa from an excursion in an open boat, has been already mentioned; and the funereal rites that were paid to his remains, after the old Roman fashion, were too remarkable circumstances to be consigned to oblivion. The ceremony took place on the 18th August 1822, on the sea-shore in the neighbourhood of Pisa, and the last scene was quite of a piece

with the preceding career of that truly eccentric character.

Mr. Shelley, after the usual preliminary education, was sent to Eton, where he displayed a character of marked eccentricity, being of a melancholy and reserved disposition, averse from all the usual pursuits of youth, and remarkably shy of intercourse with his school-companions. The progress that he made was by no means considerable, as he rather showed an aversion for all classical learning. He was fond, however, of German literature, and romantic productions, and before he arrived at his fifteenth year, he published two works, intitled "*Justrozzi*" and the "*Rosicrucian*," both of which were reprobated as being of an immoral tendency. He also for a time betrayed a fondness for chemical pursuits, but being blown up, and nearly losing his life in one of his experiments, he abandoned that dangerous course. He next turned his attention to metaphysics, in which he became a follower of the French school, and entering into a theological controversy with a dignitary of the church, he published a treatise intitled "*The Necessity of Atheism*," which was merely a recapitulation of the dogmas of Voltaire and the other disciples of that school, and he circulated it, without concealing his name, among the bench of bishops. The consequence was obvious; he had just previously entered himself at the university of Oxford, when

he was summoned before the heads of the college; and being admonished, and still proving refractory, he was expelled from the university. This disgrace had little effect upon the mind of Shelley, although it deprived him of the object of his first love, and alienated his family from him. His father received him very coolly; and his paternal residence becoming unpleasant to him, he went to London, and thence eloped with a Miss Westbrooke to Gretna Green, both being considerably under age at the time. This stroke effectually alienated his father's affections from him, and all intercourse was broken off. After some stay in Edinburgh, he crossed over to Ireland, where he published a pamphlet, which had an extensive run, recommending firmness and moderation as a more effectual means of conciliating their enemies and securing their freedom, than violence and rebellion. He likewise addressed them at some of their public meetings in a similar strain, with great fluency and eloquence.

Returning to England at the latter end of 1812, he paid a visit to the lakes (being a great admirer of Southey's poetry), and passed several days at Keswick in company with that author. Having imbibed a taste for poetry, he soon after composed his "*Queen Mab,*" and presented it to most of the literary characters of the day, and to Lord Byron amongst the rest, who, in a note to the "*Two Foscari,*" speaks of it as a poem of great

power and imagination, and avows his admiration of the poetry of that and his other productions. This work was afterwards pirated, and Shelley then disclaimed all the opinions contained in it, as being the crude notions of inexperienced youth.

Shelley's marriage, like Byron's, proved unhappy; and a separation ensuing in 1816 (the very same year in which Byron's separation took place) he went to Switzerland, and at Geneva formed a personal acquaintance with Byron, which was the commencement of a friendship that terminated but with life. The romantic scenery of this country was not lost upon his poetic genius, and he soon produced "*Rosalind and Helen,*" an eclogue, and "*an Ode to the Euganian Hills,*" both replete with beauties. The death of his wife recalled him to England, where, in the subsequent year, he again married *Mary Wolstonecraft Godwin*, daughter of the two celebrated persons whose names she bore. Though heir to an income of several thousand pounds, yet but shortly before this event he was nearly perishing through hunger; but, on coming of age, and discovering that he was intitled to some considerable reversionary property in fee, he sold it to his father for an annuity of £1,000, with which he took a house at Marlow in Buckinghamshire, and there closely followed his poetical and classical studies. During his residence at Marlow he wrote "*Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude,*" one of the most

perfect specimens of blank verse that the English language can boast, and full of that romantic scenery which his imagination had treasured up in his Alpine excursions. But careless of pecuniary matters, and generous to excess, he soon exceeded his income; and, remaining still at variance with his family, he formed the resolution of quitting his native country, and in this resolution he was confirmed by his children being taken from him by the Lord Chancellor on the ground of his atheistical principles. Again crossing the Alps, he took up his residence at Venice, where he renewed his acquaintance with Lord Byron, and wrote his "*Revolt of Islam,*" an allegorical poem in the Spenserian stanza; and also the "*Loves of Laon and Cythra,*" in which he shows his belief of the perfectibility of human nature, and of the return of the golden age, when all the different creeds and systems of the human race would be assimilated, crime disappear, and the lion and the lamb lie down in peace together. Wild and visionary as this scheme may appear, as it evidently sprang from a mind zealous for the happiness of the species, there could be nothing objectionable in it. His next performance, "*The Prometheus Unbound,*" was a bold attempt to replace a lost play of Eschylus, and evinced an acquaintance with the Greek tragedy writers uncommon at the present day. He composed it at Rome, as also his next

work "*The Cenci,*" a tragedy, which, but for the prejudice that had been excited against every thing bearing his name, must have pleased, if not on the stage, at least in the closet. Lord Byron thought it the best attempt that had been made by any of the followers of Shakspeare.

Notwithstanding his apparent remissness at school, he was perhaps one of the best classical scholars in England. Plato and the Greek dramatists were his models. He was well versed too in the modern languages; Calderon in Spanish, Petrarch and Dantè in Italian, and Goethe and Schiller in German were his favourite authors. French he disliked, and could discern no beauties in Racine.

Scouted by the world, his writings proscribed by men of all parties, discarded by his family, and suffering under a painful complaint, his powerful mind sunk into torpor and dejection. After passing several months at Naples, he finally settled with his wife in Tuscany, where he passed the last four years of his life in retirement and study. He continued to write, although he had given up publishing; but his ardent love of liberty induced him to break through this resolve on one occasion, and private friendship on another. "*Hellas, or the Triumph of Geeece,*" a drama, which he inscribed to his friend Prince Mavrocordato, has been since translated into Greek; and his attachment to the late Mr. Keats drew from him an elegy, intitled "*Adonais.*" In this last piece he

draws a forcible picture of himself, as one of the mourners at the funeral of his lost friend.

" 'Mid others of less note came one frail form,—
A phantom among men—compassionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm,
Whose thunder is its knell. He, as I guess,
Had gaz'd on nature's naked loveliness
Actæon-like; and now he fled astray
With feeble steps on the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts along that rugged way
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

" His head was bound with fancies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear, topp'd with a cypress cone,
(Round whose rough stem dark ivy tresses shone,
Yet dripping with the forest's noon-day dew),
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasp'd it. Of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart—
A herd-abandon'd deer, struck by the hunter's dart."

In this desponding state, he passed the last eighteen months of his life in constant intercourse with Lord Byron, to whom his amiable and elegant manners, and great acquirements, had endeared him. Like his friend, he always expressed a wish to die young, and he perished in the twenty-ninth year of his age, in the Mediterranean, between Leghorn and Lerici, by the upsetting of an open boat. Like Byron, too, the water was ever his favourite element; and as early as 1813, he appears

to have anticipated that it would prove his winding sheet:

"To morrow comes:
Cloud upon cloud with dark and deep'ning mass
Roll o'er the blacken'd waters; the deep roar
Of distant thunder mutters awfully;
Tempest unfolds its pinions o'er the gloom
That shrouds the boiling surge; the pitiless fiend,
With all his winds and lightnings, tracks his prey;
The torn deep yawns;—the vessel finds a grave
Beneath its jagged jaws."

The body was not discovered for fifteen days after the loss of the vessel, and when found was not in a state to suffer removal to Rome, where Mr. Shelley had expressed his desire to be buried. In order to comply with this request, Lord Byron, faithful to his trust as executor and his duty as a friend, directed the body to be burned, that the inurned ashes might be conveyed to the destined spot. Lord Byron, Capt. Trelawny, Leigh Hunt, some other spectators and soldiers of the guard, were present at the mournful ceremony. Whilst the corpse was consuming on the pile, a *curlew*,* attracted by the scent, wheeled round, screaming shrilly, and in circles so close to the company,

* Lord Byron, in his poem of "*The Island*," has drawn a similar portrait of the sea-fowl hovering over the dead bodies of the mutineers,—perhaps he took the idea from the above circumstance.

that it might have been touched by the hand, and so fearless that it could not be driven away. Scarcely was the ceremony ended, before Lord Byron, agitated by the spectacle he had witnessed, tried to dispel the gloomy impression it had left by having recourse to his favourite recreation. He stripped, plunged into the sea, and swam to his yacht, which was riding at a considerable distance from the shore. The sudden change from heat to cold brought on symptoms of a fever, but Byron applied to his usual remedy, the warm-bath, and prevented any ill effects from his indiscretion.

Thus ended the chequered life of a man who, as Lord Byron said of him, had more poetry in him than any man living; and if he were not so mystical, and would not create Utopias and set himself up as a reformer of the human race, would have ranked as one of the first poets of the age, and that the works he wrote at seventeen are much more extraordinary than Chatterton's were at the same age. Shelley's remains now rest beside those of his friend Keats at Rome in the burial ground near Caius Cestus pyramid, 'a spot so beautiful,' says he, 'as almost to make one in love with death.'

Lord Byron's establishment at Pisa was, like every thing else about him, somewhat singular; it consisted of a *monkey*,* a mastiff, a bull-dog,

* Overhearing Fletcher one day cheapening a monkey, for which the owner asked extravagantly dear, Lord Byron cried out:

two cats, several guinea and common fowls; several servants in livery, and the trusty Fletcher as *Major Domo* or superintendant of the *Menagerie*. His Lordship was very abstemious in his diet, his digestion being very weak, and he lived almost wholly upon his favourite beverage of soda water and claret. At breakfast, he drank green tea without milk or sugar, and swallowed a raw egg. The mornings were passed in billiards, conversation, reading or writing; and when tired of those employments, he would drive or ride out, generally to a farm house some miles distant, where he was in the habit of practising pistol firing. This was a favourite amusement with him, and he was become a *dead hand* at it. He used to say that he had been engaged in several duels as second, but in only two as principal, and one of them was with Hobhouse, before they became acquainted together.

The dinner was served soon after sun-set, and his Lordship would then drive to Count Gamba's, the Countess Guiccioli's father, with whom he passed some time. His attachment to this lady was extremely strong, without any thing of love about it. She was in truth a most fascinating, elegant female; a *savante* without shewing the *bas bleu*, which she had always discretion enough to keep in the back-ground. His Lordship's description of

out: "Buy it, Fletcher, buy it: I like monkies much better than men; they amuse, without ever plaguing me."

the Georgiani in the Manfredi palace at Venice was designed for her; and the beautiful sonnet prefixed to the *Prophecy of Dante* is addressed to her. Poor Shelley used to smile as he repeated a remark which he one day heard Fletcher make: 'he knew not how it was, but every woman could govern his Lordship except Lady Byron.' Returning from thence home, his Lordship employed himself in reading or writing until two or three of the clock in the morning, moistening occasionally with spirits (hollands) and water, of which latterly he drank a pint a night, by way of a *medicine* for a weak stomach, as he himself believed, or wished others to believe. He recommended it to his friends as the source of inspiration, the true *Hippocrene;* but Byron was ever in the extreme.

Lord Byron's circle at Pisa was pretty numerous, the two Gambas (father and son), the Countess Guiccioli, Captains Trelawney and Hay, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Crawford, &c. &c. The Gambas were exiles from their native city, having been proscribed and driven from thence on a suspicion of being infected with the *Carbonari* principles. In fact, a patriotic band had been formed; and although Lord Byron would not engage in their political broils and intrigues, yet he was looked upon as a friend to their party, from his coming from a land of freedom, as well as from the general tenour of his writings; and, whilst his Lordship resided at

Venice, he acknowledged that he had a magazine of arms in his house, ready for use, in case of a rising, but that the pusillanimity of Carignan had defeated the resolves and ruined the whole of the patriotic band. A discovery took place, followed by a proscription of many of the principal nobility, in which the Gambas were included; they were exiled, and the whole of their possessions confiscated. Byron was driven away from Venice by the Austrian Government. "They intercepted (said he) my books and papers, opened my letters, and proscribed my works." The same system of annoyance and persecution followed him wherever he went. The assassination which Lord Byron notices in *Don Juan*, as having taken place before his gate in Ravenna, was, as he himself expressed a belief, intended as a hint for him. He took it so at all events, and removed to Pisa; but the jealousy of the Corporation of Despots, misnamed *the Holy Alliance*, pursued him and his party thither. The police and the military watched and attended all their motions, and the insult and affray, which caused the banishment of some and the removal of the rest from that city, was evidently concerted, and the aggressor protected by the Government. Of this affair the following is the substance of the depositions (translated from the original Italian) of Lord Byron, Captains Hay and Trelawney, Mr. Shelley, and Count Pietro Gamba.

Lord Byron, Count Gamba, Mess. Hay, Trelawney, and Shelley were returning from a ride, on the 21st March 1822, and were about a qnarter of a mile from the gate *Le Piaggie*, when a horseman, in the hussar uniform, dashed at full gallop through the midst of them, almost overthrowing one of the party. Lord Byron, shocked at the insult, rode up to him, and all the rest followed him. Getting up before him, all stopped, and my Lord demanded the reason of the affront. The hussar, by way of answer, began to make use of the most opprobrious epithets and scurrilous language. Lord Byron and another of the company presented cards on which were written their names and address. The hussar followed them, abusing and threatening that he would draw his sabre, as he had often done before, and keeping his hand on it.

They were now about ten paces from the gate. In the midst of the altercation, a private soldier in the artillery uniform, called out to the hussar: "give the word to the sentinels at the gate to arrest them;" accompanying the words with gestures and words the most abusive and insulting.

The noble lord, hearing this, spurred on his horse, followed by one of the party, and, in spite of the guards with their fusils and bayonets, succeeded in clearing the gate, and gaining the street of the Corso, leading to the Lanfranchi palace.

The other three, with the courier, remained behind. Mr. Trelawney, who was foremost, had his horse seized by the bridle by two soldiers with drawn swords, and was violently assailed by the hussar, who made several cuts at him with his sabre, whilst the soldiers struck him about the thighs. He and his companions were all unarmed, and demanded of the ruffian the reason of this infamous conduct, but he answered only by blows. Mr. Shelley interposing to save his friend, received a stroke on the head which dismounted him. Captain Hay, striving to parry the stroke from his friend with a stick, which he used as a whip, the blow cut it in two parts, and wounded him on the nose. The courier also received many thrusts from the hussar and the rest of the soldiers. Afterwards, the hussar spurred his horse, and took the route of the Lung' Arno.

The noble Lord, having reached home, ordered his secretary to run to the police, and give an account of what had happened; then, not seeing his companions, he turned towards the gate, and on his way met the hussar, who attacked him, demanding, "are you satisfied?" The noble Lord, being still ignorant of what had passed at the gate, answered, "no, I am not—tell me your name." He replied, "Serjeant-Major Masi." One of his Lordship's servants arrived at the gate at this instant, and laid hold of the bridle of the serjeant's horse. My Lord commanded him to let

go. The Serjeant then spurred his horse, and flew along the Lung' Arno, through the midst of an immense crowd assembled in front of the Lanfranchi palace. Here, as it was reported, he was wounded, but we know not by whom, as we were all either in the house, or a long way behind—only the Serjeant's cap was brought into my Lord's house.

It is to be noticed, besides, that Captain Hay was confined to his house by the wound he received, and that the courier spit blood from the thrusts in the stomach, as appears from the reports of the surgeons.

Whilst the examination was going on before the police, the Lanfranchi palace was beset by the soldiers of Serjeant-Major Masi's troop, who threatened to force the gate; but they found his Lordship's party too well prepared, and too resolute, to be easily intimidated or subdued. Byron boldly remarked, "my house has been a *Bender* before now—and may be so again;" (he alluded to Charles XII. of Sweden, who converted his house at Bender into a fortress, and sustained a siege against an army of Turks). He even resumed his usual rides two days after.

In the end, all Byron's domestics, and the Counts Gamba (father and son) were ordered to quit Pisa, and the Tuscan states, within four days; and it was intimated to Byron himself that his absence would be prudent. On this occasion,

after the two Counts Gamba were gone, the Countess Guiccioli took up her residence with Byron in the Lanfranchi palace (being the first time of their residing together) previous to their embarking for Genoa.

CHAPTER VII.

Lord Byron's minor Poems.—Curious circumstances relating to his literary career.—First acquaintance with Mr. Dallas.—Success of Byron's satiric epistle,—Scotch Reviewers and English Bards.—Jeffrey's *amende honorable*.—Moore's challenge ends in a reconciliation and perfect friendship.—Character of Reviewers, such as it is, and such as it ought to be.—The Literary Gazette and Quarterly Review change sides, and become hostile to Byron.—Mr. Murray declines Byron's publications.—Also Longman and Co.—Leigh Hunt becomes Byron's publisher.—The birth and death of the *Liberal*.—End of Byron's literary career.

HAVING thus reviewed in succession the greater works of our noble bard, numerous as they are, there yet remains a long series of minor poems, sufficient of themselves to have entitled any other man to the freedom of *Parnassus*, and to set up business in the poetic line in any district of the *Pierian* region. These first flights are some of them descriptive of the varied scenes through which the author passed in his youthful days; many of them are amatory, and, owing to his disappointed passion, mostly in a plaintive style. Born with a poetical genius, and bred in Aberdeenshire, the region of romantic scenery, the germ was first formed, which the genial warmth

of love soon ripened into blossoms and fruit. These minor productions are the effusions of an unsophisticated mind, unacquainted with the ways of the world, and uncontaminated by its pleasures or vices. This opinion may differ from that of the Edinburgh Reviewers, and some other critics; but they, in a measure, retracted, and made the *amende honorable*, with the best faces they could set upon the matter, so that the world will know what value to set upon their judgment. Many parts of the "*Hours of Idleness*," are worthy of the great name which their author afterwards obtained, and well justified that opinion which Lord Byron himself* entertained and expressed of them, that, "in spite of the Reviewers, they were as good as many of his latter productions." Some few, it must be acknowledged, were rather puerile and feeble, yet none so much so, as to justify the opprobrium, that "nine men in ten who are educated in England write verses, and that the tenth man writes better verse than Lord Byron." The judgment of the Edinburgh Reviewers stands on record, and, to their eternal disgrace, it has been completely falsified.

The first piece "*On leaving Newstead Abbey*," contains a pathetic address to the shades of his

* Such was the expression of Lord Byron in the "MEMOIRS OF HIS OWN LIFE."

ancestors, and his determination not to derogate from their well merited honours. It is natural, pathetic, and indicative of a well-regulated mind, and a disposition to commence life in the most correct manner. The following lines betoken that ambition of fame which afterwards animated him through life:

"That fame, and that memory still will he cherish,
He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your renown;
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish;
When decay'd may he mingle his dust with your own,"

The next piece, "*On a distant View of the Village and School of Harrow-on-the-Hill,*" is a beautiful sketch of the days of boyhood, and a lively description of a youthful mind 'building castles in the air,' and forming visionary schemes of future greatness. His attachment to the sock and buskin, and his imaginary rivalry of Mossop and Garrick, is curious enough, considering the natural impediments to his ever shining in that character.

Youthful vanity prevented him from reflecting with the old Roman poet, that—

"Nunquam sincera bonorum
Sors ulla concessa viro; quem vultus honestat,
Dedecorant mores; animus quem pulchrior ornat,
Corpus destituit; bellis insignior ille,
Sed pacem fœdat vitiis; hic publica felix,
Sed privata minùs, partitim singula quemque
Nobilitant."

CLAUDIAN.

Fortune bestows her boons with fickle grace—
Foul manners often spoil the fairest face:
Deformity may clothe a mind 'bove price;
The great in war, in peace may sink in vice,
In public high may stand, in private low;
So partially all Nature's favours flow."

Yet, but for this natural impediment, no man, perhaps, ever possessed more of the requisites of a finished actor; he had the true *vis vivida* of an energetic mind: a just conception, a strong, fine toned flexible voice, a good person, and a graceful carriage. With such qualifications his vanity was not without foundation.

The *Amatory Pieces* are numerous, and bear token of flowing from a tender heart, truly enamoured: they are pleasing of the kind; but as some extracts have been already given from them, more are unnecessary. The *Translations* are as good of the kind as those things usually are; they are given in pleasing language and correct rhythm; which is as much as can be expected from similar works.

It was strange that the critics, with all their affected acumen, should not have discovered Byron's natural bent and qualification for *Satire*, as in the very first publication, on which they fell with so much severity, the two pieces "*Thoughts suggested by a College Examination*," and "*Granta*," might have taught them that there was danger in meddling with edge-tools. They affected to de-

spise the weakness of the arm, until they smarted under the lash of the whip. The haughty, disdainful spirit, ready to break out on the first insult, was apparent enough to have forewarned them what they might have expected, and what they really met with—a complete overthrow:

> For me, I fain would please the chosen few,
> Whose souls, to feeling and to Nature true,
> Will spare the childish verse, and not destroy
> The light effusions of a heedless boy.
> I seek not glory from the senseless crowd,
> Of fancied laurels I shall ne'er be proud;
> Their warmest plaudits I would scarcely prize,
> Their *sneers* or *censures* I alike *despise*."

"*Lachin y Gair*," before noticed, is so beautiful a picture of attachment to the romantic scenery where his youthful days were passed. that the only fault a reader of taste can find with it is, that it is too short.

"*Newstead Abbey*," is a pathetic description of and lamentation over the dilapidated seat of his ancestors, a proud eulogium on the virtues which distinguished and ennobled them, which, with a laudable ambition, he considers as an incitement to tread in their steps, and not to derogate from their well deserved fame.

"*Childish Recollections*" are fraught with beauties, which none but the eye of jaundiced prejudice, or, the determined enmity of a designing, rapacious reviewer, eager to pounce upon a rich

and school-boy victim, could pretend to overlook, or wantonly decry. Scarcely escaped from the lash of the pedagogue, they imagined that the youth would be frightened to death by the tremendous frown of an Edinburgh Reviewer; but the very first stone from the sling of little *David* pierced the skull (it could not injure the brain) of the Scotch *Goliah*, "and all *Israel* rejoiced thereat."

Byron, at different periods, published as many fugitive pieces as filled two volumes, on various subjects; several of which, such as the *Hebrew Melodies*, have been before noticed, and will not be again repeated, as we have much important matter on hand, relating to the *public* and *private* life of the author yet to discuss. It was a mistaken notion, however, not to bestow a harsher, and perhaps more deserving epithet on such unfounded calumny, that Byron had passed his time at Harrow and at Cambridge without making the usual progress which other youths usually attain under similar advantages. He confessed that he had no taste for the mathematics, and no ambition to become a *wrangler* for academic honours; but that he had made the usual proficiency, and much more so than is common with young men of his rank in life in the Latin and Greek languages, and was well read in the best authors, no man in his senses can pretend to deny. His attachment to every thing *Grecian* was

so great, that whilst in Greece he employed a considerable part of his time in learning the Romaic or modern Greek tongue, from which he translated some of the best works, and particularly the *war songs* of the brave and virtuous *Rigas*,* who died a glorious martyr to the love of his country.

There were some curious circumstances attending the commencement of Byron's literary career. If his first publication had been honoured with a small meed of praise, or had even escaped censure,

* Rigas was the modern *Tyrtæus*, who inspired the Greeks with that enthusiastic spirit which has since burst out into so glorious a flame, and enabled them to perform such wonders. He was a native of Thessaly, and passed the first part of his youth, among his native mountains, in teaching ancient Greek to his countrymen. The first burst of the French Revolution rouzed all the patriot in his veins. He discerned in it the early promise of the saturnian rule restored: and, in the brilliant visions of glory and glittering dreams of happiness, independence, and peace, he saw emblems of regenerated Greece. He joined himself to some other Greek patriots, and this wandering bard of minstrelsy strolled thoroughout Greece, rouzing the bold, and encouraging the timid and wavering by their enthusiastic inspirations, rude eloquence, and energetic poetry. Rigas afterwards went to Vienna, to complete the plan of a rising which he and his comrades had for years been endeavouring to accomplish; but he was given up, with the connivance and to the eternal reproach of the Austrian Government, to the Turks, who endeavoured by torture to force from him the names of the other conspirators; but their cruelties had only the effect of displaying the admirable courage and constancy of the patriotic and undaunted soul of Rigas.

he might perhaps have sunk into the indolence consequent upon rank and ease of circumstances, satisfied with having shewn himself possessed of some little talents; but the unjust severity of the reviewers aroused all that was *man* within him. The perusal of the critique of the Edinburgh Reviewers caused him such intense pain, that he at first strove to drown his feelings in claret. He next began to meditate revenge; and he resolved not to set out, like Don Quixote, by attacking the windmills, and getting flung into the dirt, to afford amusement to the gaping crowd. He went to work like an old stager. He made acquaintance with a literary gentleman (who designates himself as his *private secretary*) from whom, and other persons, he gleaned all that could be got of the secrets of the republic of letters,—of authors and reviewers (male and female), and thus armed at all points, he entered the lists. Whether it was through the indiscretion of Byron or his publisher, but an indiscretion it certainly was to announce the work as the offspring of "*George Gordon, Lord Byron, a Minor:*" this announcement was a kind of invitation of an attack, and we well remember, at the time, that it caused many sneers among the critics, who thought to reap an easy victory over a helpless victim. A Mr. Hewson Clark, who, as Byron informs us, had had some quarrel with his *bear* at Cambridge, becoming a writer for the *Satirist* (a scurrilous

publication long since consigned to oblivion) sought to revenge himself on its master, by attacking his works. The author and the publication Byron deemed too contemptible for any thing but just to mention the cause of the hostility.' Determined not to waste his strength on such despicable foes, he commenced with the Edinburgh Reviewers and the whole host of literati, and in less than a year appeared his *Epistle* to the *Scotch Reviewers* and *English Bards*. The public received it with avidity, and hailed the triumph of the undaunted bard over such a host of enemies. The confusion that ensued was like that occasioned by a cat bouncing in among an assembly of mice; all scampered to their holes and places of refuge, glad to escape with life and limb. Byron felt ashamed of so easy a triumph over such pusillanimous foes, and the magnanimous victor endeavoured to recal the work; but Galignani of Paris had got hold of it, and thought it too good a thing to be lost. It was reprinted, and still remains a lasting memento of Byron's triumph, and of the defeat of his arrogant assailants.

In this affair, no reasonable man could blame Byron for any thing but for an indiscriminate attack on unoffending as well as offending persons; but when a man is surrounded and hustled by a mob, he will make use of his legs and arms to extricate himself, without considering whom

he may annoy: the only question is to get himself clear. The public was pleased to see the reviewers receive a lash from their own whips, and writhe under the tortures they had so often and so wantonly inflicted on others. Byron had got scent that there were but two ways to proceed with those gentry; to throw a sop to the triple-headed *Cerberus* that guarded the entrance to their literary *pandæmonium*, or to fight them manfully at their own weapons, and beat them off their own dunghills. The former he disdained;—the latter he determined upon. He chuckled at hearing that an author might have his own critique on his own work inserted by these *impartial* judges of literature, on enclosing them a five or a ten pound note; and that there was no such thing as an independent review. He was indignant at hearing that works were decried without the reviewer having seen more than the title-page, the publisher's or author's name being deemed sufficient for the condemnation, without any reference whatever to the demerits of the performance; and that any man, who had a spite against an author, might gratify his malice by taking one of these hireling reviewers into his pay; that Kirke White and Keats, and numberless other unfortunate authors, had fallen victims to the wounds inflicted by wanton assassins or hired bravos. When Byron heard all these things, he considered and treated reviewers according to

their *merits;* his infliction was strictly justifiable, but it was too indiscriminate: the shot glanced, and struck some harmless persons. Impartial reviews are undoubtedly grand *desiderata* in literature; but, to be strictly so, they should be under the control of men of honour and feeling, as well as talents; they would then be what they ought to be: conducted as they are at present, they are any thing but what they profess to be.

If this work (the satire) made the author some enemies, it procured him a host of friends. If Bowles, Southey, &c. &c. entertained an implacable spirit of hostility, Jeffrey, Scott, and Moore, soon tendered him the hand of friendship. The public was unanimously on the side of Byron, and the ensuing publications of "*Childe Harold,*" the "*Giaour,*" the "*Bride of Abydos,*" the "*Corsair,*" and "*Lara,*" raised his literary fame above the reach of malignity. Jeffrey, who was responsible for every article contained in the Edinburgh Review, made his peace, by declaring that he was not the author of the critique on the "*Hours of Idleness,*" and that he would give up the real name to Byron, if ever he should come to Edinburgh. Byron, from many internal circumstances, concluded it to have been the work of a certain lawyer, to whom he had given some offence in speaking of a lady of his acquaintance. This opinion was confirmed by some aspersions which he threw out against Byron, when his unfortunate matrimonial business came

before the Court of Chancery; and still more so, by the same person's repeating his *unofficial* and *gratuitous* malice some time afterwards, when he came into the neighbourhood of Byron's residence at Coppet. But as this was merely surmise, Byron refrained from mentioning the name. Moore had, perhaps, the greatest reason of any to be displeased, as, besides his being represented as a writer of lewd poems, his duel with Jeffrey is ridiculed, and he was so much hurt at the mention of the *leadless* pistols, that he actually wrote a challenge to Byron, who was then abroad, and delivered it to one of his friends (Mr. Hanson, we believe). The letter was not forwarded, as Byron's return was expected; and on his arrival, it was put into Moore's hand unopened. Moore's anger had by that time subsided, and he was glad that Byron had not seen the contents, as he wished for his esteem. His hand was tendered and accepted, and the reconciliation was the commencement of a friendship which suffered no diminution through life.

Byron now again sailed prosperously through the sea of life, until his unhappy matrimonial differences again gave his enemies the opportunity of renewing their clamour against him, and numbers of unprejudiced persons, and even several of his most intimate friends, condemned his conduct in severe terms. He was stigmatized as the greatest debauchee and reprobate on earth; and dis-

daining to defend himself at the expense of one to whom he was bound by the most endearing ties, he again left England an *involuntary exile*, as he himself said, 'to fly from the pelting of the pitiless storm.'

Still, however, his literary fame suffered little or no diminution, as he continued to receive invitations from all quarters, even from Parisian booksellers, to favour them with his publications. The stream of success flowed incessantly, until '*Cain*' once more drew all his enemies upon him, who, finding him invulnerable with their wits, attached him on the score of his want of morality. The judgment of the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain sanctioned this clamour; the newspapers copied and adopted it, and Byron, conceiving that these spoke the sentiments of the people of England, thought himself hated by them, and for this reason he fancied that he hated them in return; but he fancied it only—every word, every action of his contradicted him in this point; every thing that broke from him, though involuntarily, bespoke his internal reverence for his native country, the land of his fore-fathers, and it was easy to discern that whatever his tongue might utter against her in his pique, was directly opposite to the sentiments of his heart.

Emboldened by the general outcry, the reviewers once more began to renew their insidious attacks, being afraid of venturing upon direct

hostility; and in this sort of warfare they were joined by the *Literary Gazette*, a periodical publication which (as we are informed in a note on the '*Dogs*,' a poetical piece contained in the *Liberal*,) Byron at first countenanced, but soon, for some reason or other, turned his back upon it, and the proprietor and editor set their faces against him. He was confirmed in this opinion of the decline of his reputation by Mr. Murray's refusing to have any thing to do with the publication of his '*Vision of Judgment*,' under the apprehension that, if the work should be pirated (as had been the case with '*Cain*') he should have no redress at law if the work should be deemed of an immoral or libellous tendency. So complete seemed to be the alteration in Mr. Murray's sentiments, that the *Quarterly Review* (which had hitherto been favourable to Byron) began to veer round, and, after a long interval, gave a review of Byron's tragedies which was very far from being friendly. There was evidently a vacillating—a leaning to the adverse side, although the editor felt some little hesitation at abusing the man whom he had till then been in the habit of lauding to the skies. He was probably afraid, too, of sharing the fate of Jeffrey, and of being hung up as a sort of *scare-crow*, as Byron threatened to do, if he ventured to declare open war; and Byron was not a White or a Keats, to be frightened to death by a *fly-blow*. Byron states the reason of this change

of system. Mr. Murray, he says, was offered the alternative of either giving up himself or the *Navy-Lists*. The balance was in favour of the Admiralty, and it gained the day. This was altogether probable.

The "*Vision of Judgment*" was then offered to Longman and Co., who also declined it; and in this emergency Byron turned his thoughts on Leigh Hunt, who alone, in the outcry that his matrimonial squabble had raised against him, had had courage enough to offer a single word in his favour. Hunt was accordingly invited to Pisa, with the view of conducting a publication, of which he was to reap the sole benefit. The "*Liberal*" was commenced, and Byron's "*Vision of Judgment*" appeared in the first number of it, and gave it *éclat*. But Shelley's death, and Byron's subsequent difference with Leigh Hunt, soon put an end to the scheme, and the work died a natural death. Whether that Byron was sated with publishing, or that the affairs of Greece now occupied his whole attention, here closed his literary labours. That however he intended to have resumed them is evident, from his mentioning the loss of his manuscripts on board the vessel that was captured by the Turkish frigate, on the passage to Missolonghi; and from the circumstance of his going out of his direct course to Greece, in the hope of witnessing an eruption of Mount Stromboli, in which we may suppose him to have

had some poetical view. It is probable that he intended to have made his last grand work on the subject of his beloved Greece; but, as the Spanish proverb says, "Man proposes, but God disposes;" his thread of life was nearly spun out, and *Atropos* stood ready with her scissors to cut it in twain.

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"MEMOIRS

OF

MY OWN LIFE AND TIMES,

BY

THE RIGHT HON. LORD BYRON."

CHAPTER VIII.

Recollections of Lord Byron's "*Memoirs of His Own Life.*" —Parental discord gives him a distaste for the marriage state. —His attachment to Scotland, the cradle of his poetic genius. —His passion for Miss Mary Chaworth, and disappointment. —Its dreadful effects on his temper and future course of life. —Harrow school.—Youthful scenes and friendships.—Anecdote of his prudence at Harrow.—Cambridge.—Byron's dislike of a college life, and contempt of academical honours.—Newstead Abbey, and story of the skull converted into a drinking-cup.—Byron associates with Greeks, Demireps, and Bons Vivans, and becomes a man of the town.—His imprudences a salutary lesson to other young men.—His dreadful struggles between dissipation and remorse.—Mortification on taking his seat in the House of Lords.—His final determination to go abroad.—Occurrences on the Tour until his return to England.

HITHERTO Lord Byron has been considered principally as a poet, it now remains to trace his character as a man: the varied circumstances of his life; the causes of action; their effects on his temper, manners, and course of life; and in making this survey, it will be found that, throughout the whole of the foregoing pages, the *Memoirs* have been kept so constantly in view, that there is very little to alter or amend; and, if the memoirs themselves should ever be brought to light, they

would only serve to show the accuracy with which their contents have been gradually unfolded, in the order in which the succession of events called them forth. However, to gratify the longing desire of the public, we proceed to set down as many of the statements contained in them as could be retained in memory,* to which are added such other *recollections of personal conferences* with Lord Byron, as indefatigable inquiry has enabled us to collect, and which, we trust, will leave the public little more to expect, or indeed to wish for.

Young as *George Gordon* was when he lost his father, he remembered him well, and his mother took care that he should not forget him, by telling him, as often as he disobliged her—"he had the blood of a *Byron* in his veins, and was as bad as his his father." This, as we have already seen what his father had been, was not saying much in his praise. The scenes of discord, to which he had been accustomed in his infancy, gave him such a distaste for matrimonial life, that he betted his friend Hay fifty guineas to one that he never should enter into that *blessed* state, and paid the bet soon after it was lost. His marriage was a sudden affair, as he declared that he never entertained a serious

* It was not to be expected that the memoirs could be kept secret after their contents had been perused by Lady L—b, and Lady B———h, and other persons of the feminine, or *loquacious* gender.

thought of it the day before he made the proposal; and when the contract was signed, it struck him as his own death warrant. The augury was but too well verified by the event!

To the circumstance of his youth having been passed in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen, and in occasional excursions to the highlands, he attributed his love of picturesque and romantic scenery, and likewise his attachment to Scotland; which, although it suffered some little temporary abatement from the unmerited severity of the Edinburgh Reviewers, could never be wholly obliterated. Lachin-y-Gair, and the banks of the Don, were the first sources of his poetic vein, which only waited for the genial influence of *love* to be refined into sterling ore, and enrich an admiring world. "I never wrote any thing worthy of notice," said Byron, "until I fell in love. Dantè was scarcely twelve years old when he felt a passion for his Beatrice." Byron was scarcely older when he felt the dart, and there was a similarity in other respects between the fates of the two greatest bards of their respective countries. When absent from Harrow-School, he usually passed the vacation at Newstead-Abbey, and there he first saw Miss Mary Chaworth, who was some years older than himself; but, as Byron observed, "boys love something older than themselves, and men something younger?" The rise and progress of this passion is fully described in the poem "*The*

Dream," which is a pathetic description, and a no less singular performance. The estates of the two families were adjoining to each other, but the unfortunate affair of the duel had ever since that event precluded any intimacy, or even interchange of passing civility between them. A garden gate at the boundary was extremely convenient for a love affair, and its convenience was not overlooked; it was private, and their interviews were stolen ones. Byron was serious, but his fair one was only amusing herself with the boyish passion of an agreeable relation. She gave him her picture, and it made him at once a poet; he *wrote verses on it.** She was his Beatrice, his Laura, his Helen,—all that his youthful mind could feign of perfection—an angel! "But," said Byron, "she was any thing but an angel—a perfect woman." The disappointment embittered him against the whole sex for ever afterwards. The resentment was unjust, as the individual, not the sex, was in fault; but it was excusable in one who had been so cruelly treated.

Byron returned to Harrow so full of this new passion, that, to his headstrong temper, spoiled by indulgence and want of proper restraint, school

* "Sweet copy, far more dear to me,
Lifeless, unfeeling as thou art,
Than all the living forms could be,
Save her who plac'd thee near my heart."
To Mary, on receiving her picture.

discipline became wholly obnoxious. Yet of Mr. Drury's kindness to him he was always sensible, and, as he himself acknowledged, if he could have been happy any where, he might have been so at Harrow. He delighted much in one particular spot, and used to sit for whole hours on the stile leading from the church-yard into the fields. He notices it in one of his poems, with his wishes that his remains might repose there.* The Duke of Dorset was his fag, and he inscribes one of the poems in the "*Hours of Idleness*" to that promising youth; but death defeated the predictions of the poet. Lord Clair, Scroope Davies,

* "When Fate shall chill at length this fever'd breast,
And calm its cares and passions into rest,
Oft have I thought 'twould soothe my dying hour,
If aught may soothe when life resigns her power,
To know some humbler grave, some narrow cell,
Would hide my bosom where it lov'd to dwell:
With this fond dream methinks 'twere sweet to die,
And here it linger'd, here my heart might lie;
Here might I sleep, where all my hopes arose,
Scene of my youth, and couch of my repose:
For ever stretch'd beneath this mantling shade,
Prest by the turf where once my childhood play'd,
Wrapt by the soil that veils the spot I lov'd,
Mix'd with the earth o'er which my footsteps mov'd;
Blest by the tongues that charm'd my youthful ear,
Mourn'd by the few my soul acknowledged here;
Deplored by those, in early days allied,
And unremember'd by the world beside."

Lines written beneath an Elm in the Churchyard of Harrow on the Hill, Sept. 2, 1807.

and Hay, who was with him abroad, were his particular favourites. Two things Lord Byron mentions as having performed whilst at Harrow; he fought Lord Calthorp for writing beneath his name "D—d Atheist:" and he prevented the school-room from being set on fire in a mutiny, by pointing out to the rioters the names of their ancestors written on the walls; a circumstance that would have done honour to the penetration and goodness of heart of any one much his superior in years.

So wholly was Byron's mind engrossed with his love affair, that he made no great progress in classic learning, and read little that was useful; amatory trifles and poetry occupied his whole attention, and Ovid's Epistles were far more esteemed than Virgil's epic. The progress and termination of this scene has been already described at some length. The lady ruined Byron's peace of mind without securing her own happiness; she married a profligate, whose object was her fortune, and they soon separated. Mrs. Masters afterwards solicited an interview with her discarded lover, which, by the prudent advice of his sister, he declined. Chance, however, brought them together; and although his passion was subdued by time and absence, and his heart was steeled by wounded pride, yet he could not even then behold her with indifference. What might have been his lordship's conduct if he had been

united to her, it is impossible to say; he thought it might have kept him from falling into many imprudences into which the disappointment plunged him; but he might not have found that happiness which his imagination had raised in expectation, as the lady did not by any means seem so well qualified to secure domestic comfort as the one to whom fate destined him, and with whom he failed to find it. Byron himself believed that matrimonial discord was predestined to his whole race, and was a hereditary disease in the blood. The consequences, however, were lamentable in their influence on his future conduct, as he had recourse to dissipation of every kind, in order to expel melancholy, and to drown all thoughts of the deceitful enslaver. But the worst effect, probably, was the contemptible opinion which it gave him of the whole sex, which prevented his seeking the company of the most virtuous and amiable part, and rendered him the prey of the vicious and abandoned.

Cambridge was still more irksome to Byron than Harrow, as he was grown older, and more impatient of restraint. He held the College rules in thorough contempt, and had not the least ambition to become a wrangler for academic honours. He openly avowed these sentiments; and, as he was doomed to possess a haughty, unsocial temper, he neither solicited the company of others, nor was his own much sought for. His ac-

quaintance with Hobhouse commenced in a duel, and the reconciliation having brought them once together, they became ever after the firmest friends. The *bear*, it seems, gave the greatest offence to the other grave inmates of the college, who, jealous of the preference which was given to the furred coat over the classic gown, sarcastically pronounced *Byron* and *Bruin* to be both *brutes* of the same *genus*. In short, as Byron himself declared his belief, they were as glad to see him turn his back on Cambridge, as they had been before to get rid of him at Harrow. To shew them that there was no love lost, he paid them his compliments at leave-taking in his two poems, "*Thoughts suggested by a College Examination*," and "*Granta*,"—two stinging satires. These *sins* were never forgiven him. Some of his fellow collegians afterwards became *reviewers*, and they visited the sins of the father upon his inoffensive offspring,—his "*Hours of Idleness*;" which however, observed Byron, "in spite of all criticism, contain many things that may be ranked among the best of any I ever wrote."

Leaving Cambridge, the residence of the old dilapidated seat of Newstead Abbey was rather calculated to increase than to diminish the gloom that overshadowed a mind habitually inclined to melancholy; more particularly as it was the scene where he first imbibed his hopeless passion, which every spot must have brought fresh into his recollection.

The story of the skull converted into a drinking-cup, when divested of the exaggerations of malevolence and misrepresentation was nothing more than a youthful frolic, of which there is, perhaps, not one of us but has been guilty at some period or other of his life, and which men of sprightly imagination and brilliant genius are more liable to fall into than mere dull, stupid, plodding mortals. Wilkes and Curran belonged to clubs of a similar nature in England and Ireland, of which the most shining geniuses of both countries were members. The skull never belonged to any of Lord Byron's ancestors, not one of them having ever been buried there. It was found by the gardener whilst digging, and had probably belonged to some jovial *Father Paul*, one of the old monks of the old abbey, to whose fat, 'well capon-lined' paunch it had served as a funnel in many a hardly contested drinking bout. Eager to seize on any occasion that might tend to dissipate his painful reflexions, Byron was seized with a whim of having it mounted goblet-fashion; it was accordingly sent to London, and put out of hand in a workmanlike style. But the joke ended not here: he established a new *Order of the Skull*, consisting of a dozen members, of whom he constituted himself abbot, or grand master. The costume of the fraternity was a black gown, whenever a chapter was held; and they all quaffed out of the old monk's cranium, chaunting the

verses which the grand master had composed, and caused to be inscribed upon it.

To a mind already smarting with the "pangs of despised love," the severity with which his infant-muse was greeted by the Edinburgh Reviewers was not a very healing balsam; Byron's mind, on the first perusal of this bitter philippic, resembled, as he himself said to a friend, mounts Ætna or Vesuvius, just previously to an explosion. It laboured with indignation almost to suffocation. At first he flew to wine, which, as is ever the case, only aggravated the disease, and he seriously sat about that revenge which he so amply gratified by his "*Epistle to Scotch Reviewers and English Bards,*" as has been already detailed. But, although he had full satisfaction for this affront, the barbed arrow still stuck in his side;—he could not forget his 'MARY,' perfidious, and cruel as she had proved herself to be. Grasping at any thing that promised any kind of relief from the poignancy of his sufferings, he reluctantly fell into every kind of dissipation, and ran headlong into the snare of any female that thought it worth her while to lay a trap for him. He gives a detail of these excesses in his *Memoirs*, accompanied by the salutary reflection, that the miserable consequences of such a course of life are the best of all admonitions to others to steer clear of similar conduct. At one time he dressed up a certain female in man's clothes, and passed her off as a

relation, that his mother might not hear of his having any female acquaintance.—One *conscientious* matron, a Mrs. G—, made him the offer of her daughter for one hundred pounds; but Byron did ample justice to the virtue of the daughter, who deprecated his taking advantage of their necessities, and made a feeling appeal to his generosity. She was not disappointed. Byron sent her the stipulated sum, without insisting upon the proposed equivalent of *personal* security. —"I was not a Joseph nor a Scipio," said he, "but I can safely affirm that I never in my life seduced any woman."* He undoubtedly told the truth, for, besides the low estimation in which he held the whole sex, he had neither the fawning

* Of Lord Byron's morality in this respect, there is a remarkable anecdote related. He was informed that the son of one of his tenants had seduced a female of his own station in life, and being intreated to interpose his authority to procure justice for her, he gave it as his opinion, that although it might be almost impossible, in some cases, to abstain from doing wrong, yet that it was an indispensable duty to make what reparation for it lay in our power. Here the parties were equal, and the seducer ought to marry the unfortunate victim of his passion; had the case been otherwise, money would have been a very inadequate compensation. He would never sanction in another what he would not allow himself to do. He had committed many excesses, but he made what amends he could for them; of seduction he had never been guilty; he detested the idea of it; and if the young man looked for a continuation of his favour, he must immediately restore the unfortunate girl to the rank she before held in society.

humility nor the persevering obsequiousness which form the essential character of a seducer. He never thought any woman worthy of the trouble of a regular siege. Wherever he found female virtue struggling against poverty, he respected the one and relieved the other; as in the case of the authoress, his generosity to whom has been before noticed.

With another lady, somewhat above the *royal* standard of 'fair, fat, and forty,' the mother of several beautiful children, Byron had an intimacy that continued for several months; and was so much attached to this autumnal beauty, as to find no little difficulty in breaking with her, even after he had discovered that she was inconstant to him. He was almost persuaded to rusticate with her on the continent, and narrowly escaped from the commission of so excessive a piece of folly. He at length got away from the chains of this antiquated Venus, but it was only to engulph himself in folly of another species. He became a Bond-Street and box-lobby lounger, and his leisure hours were wasted in street perambulations, boxing schools, drinking parties, and fashionable *hells*. He relates an adventure that happened at one of the latter: himself, Scroope Davies, and H—, clubbed nineteen pounds, being their whole stock of *ready*, and lost it one night at hazard; and afterwards, getting drunk together to drive away *ennui*, Davies and H— fell out.

Davies wrote to Byron to request the loan of his pistols, to put a quietus to himself and his follies at a blow; but Byron declined the loan, alledging that the pistols would be forfeited as a deodand. "I know," said he, "that, in similar cases, a joke is more efficacious than all the prosing in the world." Byron was right; his satirical remark prevented the premeditated suicide.

Yet, although associating with *Greeks* (gamblers), Byron was no *Greek* himself; he was never known to fasten himself upon other young men of fortune to prey upon them. Although he had some amours, he was drawn into them by women "open to all parties and influenced by none;" women who were as free as air; and he was never called to account for seduction or *crim. con.*; they were considered as *fair game.* If he indulged in bacchanalian revels, it was with men of sense and genius like himself, with whom it was at once a pleasure and a praise to associate. Yet, to himself, were the consequences no less fatal. Such a dissolute course of life enervated his mind, and alienated it from all noble pursuits:

> "The even mead; that erst brought sweetly forth
> The freckled cowslip, burnet, and green clover,
> Wanting the scythe, all uncorrected, rank,
> Conceives by idleness; and nothing teems
> But hateful docks, rough thistles, kecksies, burs,
> Losing both beauty and utility."
>
> *Shakespeare.*

He was aware of the self-debasement, the suicide of character of which he was guilty. His gambling and loose associates were by no means suited to his taste; he despised, he loathed them,—and almost himself. His was, indeed, a dreadful situation, as his conscience continually upbraided him, filled him with shame and remorse for his self-degradation, and a cheerless indifference to all the world around him. He felt himself a blank in the creation, in which he was qualified to fill up a most important part, and the bitter reflection harrowed up his soul. He often formed resolutions of amendment, and as often broke them; and in this dreadful vortex he continued struggling until he was nearly lost. His strength of mind at length enabled him to form the best expedient that could be derived for extricating himself from his dangers and difficulties, which was to quit for awhile the scene of his follies. He would thus not only get rid of a disagreeable set of acquaintance, but improve his mind, and increase his stock of knowledge by his observations on foreign countries. It was the most prudent resolve that could be taken by one in his situation, and he lost no time in putting it into execution. This determination he was probably induced to take, by the mortification which he was doomed to undergo on so important an occasion as the taking his seat in the House of Lords, which took place on the 13th March 1809.

He had sent to the Earl of Carlisle to inform him of his intention, and had in answer received only a cold and formal account of the etiquette usually observed on such occasions, without any offer of personal introduction, as might have been naturally expected. Thus was this young man, on coming of age, so neglected by his own relatives, and so unconnected with persons of his own rank, as to be left without a single peer to introduce him in the usual manner. The Lord Chancellor Eldon received him in the most cordial manner; but Byron's soul was chilled, and, having taken his seat for a few minutes on the opposition bench, he left the House, resolved no more to set foot within it, until he should have travelled abroad, and either obliterated his follies by future good conduct, or they should have been forgotten during his absence. How deeply he resented the neglect of the noble Earl, his relative, the publication of his satire soon after evinces; and, all circumstances duly considered, no reasonable man can attach the black charge of ingratitude to Lord Byron's character, after having experienced such cutting treatment. Had his satire appeared some days previously, instead of subsequently to his taking his seat in the House of Lords, Byron would have had numerous offers of introduction from all quarters; *he* would not have wanted friends, who could so easily overthrow all his enemies!

On so youthful a mind, what impression might not have been made by the countenance and advice of a respectable and powerful friend, who might have made him ashamed of his weaknesses, and endeavour to retrieve his character! If not an act of duty, it certainly would have been one of humanity, and it was well worth the experiment. It was not made: and the only wonder was, not that Lord Byron fell into a few excesses, but that, left to the impetuosity of youthful passions without a single curbing rein, he had not committed many more and greater ones.

His preparations, on this occasion, afforded indubitable proofs of the natural goodness of his heart, and of the strength of his filial affection for his only remaining parent. He set her mind somewhat at ease by making his will, in which he secured an ample provision for her, by bequeathing to her the manor of Newstead Abbey for her life, for the sale of which he had previously rejected advantageous proposals, solely on her account, and in compliance with her earnest wishes that he should not part with his ancestorial seat.

On the day before his departure, he was destined to meet with another disappointment, which, to one of his sensibility was by no means calculated to lessen the morbid disposition which he had imbibed towards the human race, and of which he takes particular notice in one of the notes on the "*Pilgrimage of Childe Harold.*" He had

formed a particular intimacy with a young school-fellow of rank; their portraits had been painted, with the express view of being exchanged, and kept as momentos of their inseparable friendship. Byron met this friend, and announced to him that as his departure was fixed for the next day, he wished him to come and pass an hour with him, to solace the grief of leave taking. "Will it be believed," exclaimed Byron, "that this *dear* friend excused himself, alleging that he had to go shopping with his mother and some other ladies; and that too on the eve of my departure, and when it was very uncertain whether I should ever live to return?"

Exclaiming, with the poet,

"Friendship's but a name!"

he left London (on the 11th June 1809), with no very enviable feelings; regretting, and believing himself regretted by none, except those very few individuals to whom he was allied by blood.

He was attended by a German servant, who had before been in Persia (whither Byron intended to have bent his course) with Mr. Wilbraham, and his English valet, William Fletcher, who followed his footsteps during eighteen years, and whose faithful services never ended, until he had seen his master's remains deposited in their place of rest.

He steered his course from Falmouth through Portugal and Spain, to Malta, Previsa, Smyrna, Constantinople, the Grecian Islands, Athens, and Patras and although he kept no regular journal, yet the descriptions in Childe Harold, and the accompanying notes, are the lively sensations that occurred to his mind as he traversed every spot in succession. At Mafra the monks of the convent maintained a conversation with him in Latin, and (with true monkish ignorance) asked him if the *English* had *any books* in their country. In passing from Mafra to Seville, he was particularly struck by the goodness of the horses and roads in Spain, their rate of travelling being nearly four hundred miles in four days without inconvenience.

At Seville he was accommodated in the house of two unmarried ladies. He tarried there three days; and although one of the ladies was on the point of being married, she paid the most marked attentions to his Lordship, which not a little surprised him, as they were women of good reputation. She embraced him at parting, cutting off a lock of his hair, and presenting him at the same time with one of her own. At Cadiz, various incidents occurred, calculated to confirm him in the opinion he had formed at Seville of the Andalusian belles, which made him leave the country with regret, and with a resolution of returning to it.

When he arrived at Yanina, the Vizier (Ali Pacha being at Berat) hearing that an English

nobleman was arrived in the country, gave orders for his being supplied with every kind of accommodation free of expense, so that he had only to make some presents to the slaves. From Yanina he went to Tepalenè, which on entering recalled to his mind the description of Branksome Castle in Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel. The other observations that occurred to him are all faithfully and beautifully described in the second canto of Childe Harold. He was lodged in the palace, and the next day introduced to Ali, who said that the English minister had informed him that Lord Byron's family was a great one. The Pacha added, that he knew him to be a man of rank by the smallness of his ears, his curling hair, and his little white hands; and told him to consider himself under his protection, as a son under that of his father, while he remained in the Turkish dominions.

A circumstance occurred at Yanina that impressed itself indelibly on his memory; he once thought of founding a tale on it, but the subject was too horrible. An established law of the sanguinary tyrant condemned any Turkish woman who should be discovered intriguing with a Christian to be stoned to death. Love is not always to be controlled by edicts, nor to be deterred by dangers; and although many unfortunate females had fallen victims to Ali's barbarity, others were not wanting sufficiently bold to run the risk. A girl

sixteen years old, beautiful in the extreme, was suspected of carrying on an intrigue with a Neapolitan of some consequence, whose long abode in that city was attributed to his attachment to her. The crime (for so these barbarians deemed it) was but too fully proved, and they were torn asunder. They might have escaped punishment, she by abjuring her religion, or he by adopting hers; but they refused to apostatize from their faith. Ali Pacha was never known to pardon; she was stoned to death, although then in the fourth month of her pregnancy; and he was sent to a town where the plague was raging, and where he died, rejoicing at not having outlived the object of his passion.

In sailing from Previsa to Patras, in a Turkish vessel provided for him by Ali Pacha, Lord Byron was nearly lost, in a moderate gale of wind, through the unskilfulness of the Turkish officers and sailors; luckily the wind abated, and they were driven on the coast of Suli. The confusion on board the ship was extreme, and somewhat increased by the distress of the valet, Fletcher, whose alarms on every symptom of danger, and his complaints of the privations of the usual comforts of tea, coffee, &c. not a little amused his master, and were often the subjects of much mirth to him. A singular instance of disinterested hospitality, from the chief of a Suliote village, occurred to Lord Byron, in consequence of the

inconvenience which he had experienced on board the Turkish vessel. The honest Albanian, after lending him all the assistance in his power to relieve the distress into which he was plunged, supplying his wants, and lodging him and the whole of his company, refused to receive any remuneration whatever, and only requested a written acknowledgment that he had been well treated. When Lord Byron would have pressed money upon him, he said—"I wish you to love me—not to pay me."

The intention of travelling on to Persia was abandoned at Constantinople, for that of passing the following summer in the Grecian Archipelago and the Morea. Mr. Hobhouse, therefore, quitted him to return to England, and he was once more left alone. Several persons offered to join him in excursions to Persia or Egypt; but he preferred wandering over the old track alone, as his mind was still more inclined to solitude than to society.

At Constantinople, his opinion of Lady M. W. Montague was, that she had not overstepped the truth so much as any other woman would have done under similar circumstances; but he ridiculed her saying that "St. Paul's would cut a strange figure by St. Sophia's." Making all due allowances for the great interest which the venerable structure of St. Sophia possessed from many considerations, he thought it by no means equal to some of the mosques, and not to be mentioned

on the same day with St. Paul's. In his judgment, the cathedral at Seville was superior to both, or to any religious edifice he knew. He was delighted with the grandeur of the city walls, and the propriety of the Turkish burying grounds; and he looked with rapture at the prospect on each side of the seven towers, to the end of the golden horn.

At Patras he was visited by a most dreadful fever. Fletcher had been left at Athens sick, and he had no attendants but the Albanians, to whom he owed his life. They were devotedly attached to him, and watched day and night. He was more indebted to a good constitution for getting over his disorder, than the drugs of an ignorant Turk, who passed for a physician. He would, however, have been glad to have given up his pretensions, if he could but have escaped from the responsibility of his undertaking; for the Albanians threatened him, that if Byron was not cured by a certain day they would put an end to him. They are not people to make idle threats, and the poor devil of a doctor was more pleased with his recovery than even his Lordship himself.

After having passed some time with the principal Greeks in the Morea and Livadia, he classed them as inferior to the Turks, but superior to the Spaniards, whom he placed before the Portugueze. He had conversed with the French, Italians, Germans, Danes, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, &c. &c.

and, without losing sight of his own country, he could form an estimate of the manners of others: it gratified him to find that his England was superior in most things, and scarcely equalled in any. This evinced that his soul was not dead to the patriotic principle.

His affairs now recalled him to England, and the proposal to sell Newstead was renewed. At this period, however, he resolved not to part with it: if Newstead remained his property, he would return to England; if parted with, he would remain abroad. If it was necessary that money should be raised by the disposal of some parts of his estates, he preferred to part with Rochdale. Fletcher was therefore sent on before him to England, with papers to that effect, and he himself made preparations to follow him.

CHAPTER IX.

Further Recollections of the Memoirs of Lord Byron, &c.—Return to England.—"Childe Harold," and "Hints from Horace."—Maiden speech in the House of Lords.—Publication of "Childe Harold."—Congratulations from all quarters.—Billet-doux from Lady L——.—The commencement, progress, and termination of a serio-comic love-adventure.—Increasing popularity, and its consequences.—Temporary seclusion in the country.—Return to London.—Successive publications of "The Giaour," "The Bride of Abydos," and "The Corsair."—Cavils of his enemies at the latter publication refuted by Mr. Dallas.—Third and last speech in Parliament, and end of political career.—Elected one of the Committee of Management of Drury Lane Theatre.—Opinions of the Drama; Dramatic Writers, ancient and modern; Actors, Actresses, and Stage Affairs.—Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, Miss O'Neil, Kean, Dowton, &c.—Monk Lewis, and Mr. Sheridan.—Farewell address.

On the 2d July, 1811, Lord Byron landed in England from on board the Volage frigate, bringing with him the first part of the "*Pilgrimage of Childe Harold,*" and another poem, intitled "*Hints from Horace,*" being a paraphrase on Horace's Art of Poetry, and, in fact, a continuation of the "*Epistle to the Scotch Reviewers and English Bards.*" On his arrival in London, at Reddish's Hotel, he was waited upon by Mr.

Dallas, to whom he produced his literary labours, and made him a present of the "Pilgrimage of Childe Harold." The "*Hints from Horace*" were entrusted to Cawthorn, the bookseller who had published the "Epistle to the Scotch Reviewers and English Bards;" and "*Childe Harold*" was put into the hands of Mr. Murray, after the publication had been declined by Mr. Miller, on account of the harsh manner in which Lord Elgin was spoken of in it, to whom Miller was bookseller and publisher.

These arrangements were scarcely made before Lord Byron was called away to Newstead Abbey by the sudden indisposition of his mother, who, notwithstanding his instant departure and travelling post haste, breathed her last before he reached the place. His feelings on this melancholy occasion were extremely acute, and for a while he again sank into a state of despondency, wandering through the solitary recesses of the Abbey, or pondering over the skulls in his library. He was at length roused from this lethargy by the necessary correspondence respecting the publication of the *Pilgrimage*, and by the urgency of his affairs, which called him into Lancashire, whither he made a journey, which served in some measure to divert his melancholy. He then came to London, as the Parliament was about to assemble, being at the time wholly undetermined what course he should steer; whether to hazard

treading the intricate maze of politics, or pursue the literary one which he had already so successfully begun. This perplexity was much increased by the embarrassment of his affairs, which gave him so much uneasiness, that he even then began to entertain serious thoughts of selling Newstead Abbey, and leaving England, to settle himself in one of the islands of the Grecian Archipelago, where he might subsist at a much cheaper rate than in his own country, to which he had now nothing to bind him. He was indeed, as he himself expressed it, truly friendless,—quite alone in the world. For some reasons or other, his relations never gave themselves the least trouble about him. At Aberdeen—at Harrow—at Cambridge—he was left wholly to himself, and the imprudences which followed the unrestricted and ungovernable passions of youth were urged against him to blacken his character; in so much that, as we have already seen, the Earl of Carlisle, a powerful relation, who might have been of the utmost service to him, stood aloof from him, which, (as it was supposed, this would not have been the case but for some very strong reasons,) rendered him, as it were, a *marked* character. His satire had, however, evinced that he would not suffer himself to be trampled upon, and that he had both the spirit and the power to resist any aggression; but this, although it gained him many admirers, also raised him up many

enemies. He was courted by the few by whom he was most dreaded, and who were ready at every false step to crush him beneath their cowardly vengeance.

The Parliament was about to discuss the affair of the alarming riots in Nottingham, where the repeated destruction of the frames or machines had taken place, as being deemed inimical to manual labour. As Lord Byron's estate lay in that county, he conceived it would be incumbent on him to take some notice of this affair, and also that it might be a fair opportunity to gain popularity, by making it the subject of his maiden speech. Lord Holland, as the Recorder of Nottingham, and one of the heads of the Opposition, was expected to take the lead in opposing the bill; and Mr. Rogers thought that this would be a good opportunity of reconciling these two lords, and bringing them together. Lord Holland, from his seniority and his established character, had a right to have expected the first visit: but he sacrificed etiquette on this occasion, and the introduction took place at Lord Byron's apartments in St. James's Street. To the intimacy which ensued may be attributed the subsequent suppression of the "*Epistle to the Scotch Reviewers and English Bards*" (in which Lord Holland cut rather a conspicuous figure), and also of the "*Hints from Horace,*" which were nearly ready for publication; and the loss of which, from cer-

tain passages which have been given to the public, need not be regretted. Cawthorn soon after received orders to destroy the whole impression of both works.

The debate on the frame-work bill took place on the 27th Feb. 1812, when Lord Byron gave his *maiden* speech, which made a considerable impression on the House, and procured him the congratulations and an introduction to most of the Opposition lords. It was, as Lord Byron expressed himself, the best possible advertisement to "*The Pilgrimage of Childe Harold.*" It certainly excited no little expectation from that work, of which some very favourable hints had been already given to the public by the *Aristarchus* of the Quarterly Review.

In the following month "*Childe Harold*" made his appearance, and the rapid sale of the first edition is a proof of the favourable reception which the public gave to the travelled youth. The Author's fame was raised to so elevated a station, that his company was courted by all circles; he was all at once become the bard of the ball-room, and the hot-pressed darling of the boudoir. Complimentary letters and poetical effusions poured in from all sides—from lords, commoners, critics, poets, and pretenders to poetry,—and, what ought to have been still more flattering to a young poet, from the fair sex, one of whom sent him a copy of verses, with a letter beginning "*Dear*

Childe Harold," expressive of the greatest admiration, and assuring him that she should be happy to be acquainted with him, although she could feel no other emotion for him than admiration and regard, as her heart was already engaged to another. An answer was requested to be left at Hookham's library, addressed to Mr. Sidney Allison. This overture brought about an acquaintance, and a *liaison,* which was productive of the most whimsical, ludicrous, serio-comic incidents, as the lady was a true heroine of romance—a perfect female Quixote in adventures of the heart. She was not handsome, and could boast but few personal attractions, but she was young, possessed of a genteel figure, and allied to the first families. She was a thorough-paced sentimentalist, a novel reader and writer, and given to all those eccentricities which usually are attached to such a character. She was (as she stated herself to be) engaged to another, that is to say, married; but it was a match of *convenience,* as no couple could be more fashionably indifferent to each other. She had never been in love, and very possibly she had no heart, but then her head was sufficient to supply all deficiencies; she could feign a passion, if she could not feel it. Byron was drawn insensibly into a constant intercourse, in which both sides kept up a hot and steady fire of amatory verses and billets-doux. In short, he was impressed into the service, and put on board love's tender,

where he was kept to hard duty, as his mistress was rather of an imperious nature, and fond of unlimited sway. Byron submitted to the thraldom for a time, as he disliked any thing like *fracas*, and was of too indolent a disposition to give himself or others much trouble: but he did not think himself bound to observe constancy towards his frail fair one; and there were several rehearsals of 'lovers' quarrels' previously to the final rupture. The lady suspected his infidelity, and narrowly watched to discover his intrigues. On one occasion she, terrier like, earthed a lady into his lodgings, and followed in the disguise of a carman. The valet, who did not see through the masquerade, let her enter the apartments, when, to the despair of poor Fletcher, she put off the man and assumed the woman—*femme enragée*. A scene ensued which was worthy of Faublas. Her conduct was unaccountable madness—a compound of malice and jealousy. It was settled that they were afterwards to meet as strangers. Sometime after they met at a ball: the lady came up, and asked Byron if she might waltz; he thought it perfectly indifferent whether she waltzed or not, and he told her so, with politeness, but much coolness. After she had finished, a tragi-comic scene took place, which was in the mouth of every one, and furnished mirth for a few days. She stabbed herself with a pair of scissars, and cut herself with a tumbler. Finding that he still

maintained the most perfect indifference, she was enraged beyond all bounds, and promised young ——— to install him in his place, if he would call Byron out. Probably he thought the premium not worth the risk; yet after all this she was so infatuated as to call at his apartments (certainly with no view of shooting herself), when he was from home, and, finding "*Vathek*" lying on the table, she wrote on the first page, "Remember me!" Byron had cause to remember her, and, in the irritability of the moment, he wrote beneath the two words, the following stanzas:

Remember thee—remember thee!
Till Lethe quench life's burning stream;
Remorse and shame shall cling to thee,
And haunt thee like a feverish dream.

Remember thee!—aye, doubt it not—
Thy husband, too, shall think of thee;
By neither shall thou be forgot—
Thou false to him—thou fiend to me!

Determined not to be behind hand in literary warfare, the lady set to work and painted his Lordship as a hero of romance, and many persons believed that *Glenarvon* was a drawing from the life; the Germans were persuaded of it, and Madame de Stael actually asked Byron himself if it was a likeness. This ridiculous affair ended as it began, in a literary way, invectives being substituted for compliments.

To so great celebrity had *Childe Harold* now attained, that he was become the subject of general conversation, and, so great an alteration was effected, that all minds were disposed to think most favourably of him, and to discredit all the tales that had been circulated to his prejudice. The satirist was overlooked in the virulent and malignant attack that had been made upon him, and never was there a more sudden and complete transition from utter neglect to the most assiduous adulation. The man, who could not get a single brother peer to introduce him to the House of Lords, was now courted by every person in the kingdom, from the highest to the lowest. The Prince Regent, being at a party where he was present and learning who he was, sent a general officer to signify his desire that he should be presented in form. He was so; and the fascinating manners and gracious affability of the Prince had so great an effect upon *Childe Harold*, that, but for the accidental postponement of the next levee, and some other intervening circumstances, he might have become a constant visitor at Carlton House, and a thorough paced courtier. He was actually dressed to attend the levee, before it was announced as deferred: it was the first and last time that he made preparations for such an occasion. Lord Holland and some other opposition peers stepped in;———and Lord Byron was induced to forego all his full blown schemes of

royal favour. "I have been taxed with ingratitude in this instance," says Lord Byron, "but where there were no favours conferred, there could be no obligation, and consequently no ingratitude."

The poison of flattery insinuated itself through every pore, and, although Lord Byron at first affected to be superior to it, yet he willingly accepted the incense and the invitations of his adulators, and insensibly became a professed votary of fashionable life. His time was wholly engaged and his conversation engrossed by the parties at which he had been, and those to which he was invited. Holland House, against the proprietors of which he had levelled the shafts of satire, was now become one of his favourite places of resort, and the effect which these visits had upon his mind, were evidently displayed by the suppression of his satires, and by the line of political conduct which he afterwards pursued.

The Parliament was soon after engaged in the discussion of the important subject of Roman Catholic emancipation, and, on the 21st of April 1812, Lord Byron again attracted notice by a speech on Lord Donoughmore's motion for a committee on the Roman Catholic claims. Byron advocated the cause of emancipation, in a luminous harangue, which procured him increased admiration. In fact, he became quite inebriated with success, and this, perhaps, he might deem the

happiest season of his life; but the pleasure was not without alloy, as his affairs continued in a most perplexed situation. The necessity of parting with Newstead Abbey was strenuously urged by the professional gentleman who managed his concerns, and he yielded a reluctant acquiescence. It was put up for sale at Garraway's Coffee-house, but bought in, only 90,000*l.* being offered for it, which was much beneath its real value. It was then contracted for, privately, by a Mr. Claughton for 140,000*l.*, but the purchase not being completed, the deposit money of 20,000*l.* was forfeited to Lord Byron. It was again disposed of, and the sale finally carried into effect.

In the autumn of 1812, Lord Byron retired to a house which he had engaged in the country, where he lived retired for some months, during which it appeared that he was most assiduously engaged in his literary labours. In the spring of 1813, he returned to London, and took up his residence in Bennet-street, St. James's. During his retirement in the country, he had written the "*Giaour*," the principal incidents in which were founded on an occurrence in which he himself was nearly and deeply interested, but which his apprehensions of its being considered as bordering upon the Munchausen, made him suppress the fact of its being a genuine story, and refrain from mentioning it in the preface. During his stay at Athens, there was a law which rendered it crimi-

nal for a Christian to intrigue with a Mahomedan female. Byron was enamoured with a Turkish girl, and all went on swimmingly till the feast of the Ramadan, which lasts forty days, a rather long fast for lovers, as all intercourse between the sexes is forbidden by the law, and the women are strictly confined to their apartments. Byron was in despair, and took some steps to procure an interview, which unhappily led to a discovery of the intrigue. The penalty on the poor female was death,—a horrible death! and an order was issued for its immediate execution, which was to be kept secret to prevent him from interfering. A mere accident warded off the completion of this horrid sacrifice. He was taking his usual ride one evening by the sea side, when he saw a crowd of people moving towards the shore, with the arms of the soldiers glittering among them. They were not so far off, but that he thought he could at times distinguish a faint and stifled shriek. His curiosity was forcibly excited, and he dispatched a servant to inquire the cause of the procession. He was horror-struck at learning that they were conveying an unfortunate girl, sewn up in a sack, to be thrown into the sea! Byron did not hesitate what steps to take. He knew that he could depend upon his faithful Albanians, and he rode up to the officer commanding the party, demanding his prisoner, and threatening, in case of refusal, to adopt means to compel him. The officer did not

like the business he was engaged in, or, perhaps, was overawed by the determined looks of the Albanians, and consented to accompany Byron back to the city with the prisoner, whom he discovered to be his Turkish favourite. Byron's influence with the magistrate, together with a weighty bribe, procured her release; but it was only on condition that he should discontinue all intercourse with her, and that she should instantly quit the city, and be sent to her friends in Thebes. There she died, a few days after her arrival, of a fever, perhaps of fright, or of love.

Lord Byron was undetermined whether to publish the "*Giaour*," until he received a message from Mr. Gifford, calling on him not to give up his time to light compositions, as he had a genius to hand him down to the latest posterity with Spenser and Milton. He had also prepared for the press the "*Bride of Abydos*," and Murray sent him an offer of one thousand guineas for these two poems. They were sent to him for publication unconditionally as to any remuneration. These publications met with a rapid sale, and created a strong desire for further productions from the same pen. Whilst the demand was at the highest, Lord Byron produced "*The Corsair*," which he presented to Mr. Dallas. This work was likewise disposed of to Mr. Murray, and whilst it was in the press, Byron wrote the dedication to Mr. Moore, and subjoined to the poem some "*Stanzas*

on a Lady Weeping." These lines were maliginantly represented to relate to a certain illustrious young female, and as intended to widen the breach between her and her royal parent, and to libel the Sovereign. Being attached to a publication that was avowed by his Lordship's name in the title-page, he was assailed by the leading newspapers, in verse and in prose; every circumstance of his life, his sentiments, and his writings were ripped up and maligned. The suppressed satire was reprinted, with the names of his *new* friends at full length, in the *Courier*, *Post*, and other ministerial newspapers. To mortify him still more, he was taxed with pocketting large sums as remunerations for his writings. There was a constant fire kept up to gall him, and it was evident that his enemies had lain in ambuscade waiting only for his making one false movement to fall upon and overwhelm him. It was resolved by Byron and Murray to take no notice of these calumnies; but Dallas, as having himself received several of the remunerations which Byron was said to have pocketted, thought it incumbent on him to state the truth, and he did so, in the letter from which we have already given an extract. As to the obnoxious stanzas, he asserts that Lord Byron never contemplated the horrors that had been attributed to him. The lines alluded to were an impromptu upon a single well known fact,—the failure in the endeavour to form an Administration in the year

1812, according to the wishes of the author's friends, on which it was reported that tears were shed by an illustrious female. The words *disgrace* and *fault*, mentioned in the stanzas, were those of not saving a sinking realm, by taking the writer's friends to support it. Never was there a more simple political sentiment expressed in rhyme. If this be a libel—if this be the undermining of filial affection, where shall we find a term for the language often heard in both Houses of Parliament?

"*The Corsair*" met with a rapid sale, the publisher having acknowledged that several thousand copies were disposed of on the first day. In the original MS., the principal female personage was called *Francesca* (after a person with whom the author had become acquainted on his travels), which he altered to *Medora*, before the poem went to press.

In May 1814, he commenced "*Lara*," which he finished about the latter end of the following month, June, without determining whether he should decidedly make it a continuation of "*The Corsair*," or leave that point to the reader's imagination. These two last poems (together with some additional stanzas of *Childe Harold*) were composed at the author's chambers in the Albany, where there was a long table covered with books standing before the fire-place, with an easy chair at one end of it for his own use, and a small circular table at his side; opposite to him was placed

another easy chair for the accommodation of an occasional visitor: such was the bard's study!

During this interval (on the 13th June, 1813), Lord Byron made his third and last speech in the House of Lords, on the presentation of the petition of Major Cartwright, as has been already noticed; it met with no success, and Byron gave up all further thoughts of cutting a figure in a political line. "Harrow school," he observed, "has been the nursery of almost all the politicians of the day; and yet I take little interest in the politics at home. I am not made for a politician. I despise the idea of being an appendage to any party, or the taking a share in the petty intrigues of cabinets, or the pettier factions and contentions for power among parliamentary men. Perhaps, if I had never travelled, my views might have been more limited; they now extend to the good of mankind in general,—of the world at large. (No proof of misanthropy this!) Perhaps, the prostrate situation of Portugal and Spain,—the tyranny of the Turks in Greece,—the oppressions of the Austrian government at Venice,—the mental derangement of the Papal states, (not to mention Ireland,) tended to inspire me with a love of liberty. No Italian could have rejoiced more than I, to have seen a constitution established on that side the Alps. I felt for Romagna as if she had been my own country, and would have risked my life and fortune for her, as I may yet for the

Greeks. I am become a citizen of the world." Thus terminated Lord Byron's political career!

The Committee of Management of Drury Lane Theatre were too well convinced of the benefits that might accrue from availing themselves of Lord Byron's talents and popularity, not to be desirous of adding his name to the strength, or rather weakness of the concern. Byron's friend (Mr. Douglas Kinnaird) transferred to him a five hundred pound share for the purpose of qualifying him to vote. "I found the employment not over pleasant (says Byron); what with Irish authors and pretty poetesses. Five hundred plays were offered to the theatre during the year in which I was literary manager. It was no easy task to wade through all this trash, and a still harder one to persuade the authors that it was so." How he laboured to fulfil the arduous duties of this office, he himself has told us in his preface to "*Marino Faliero.*" Little did he then imagine that the employment would involve him in other disagreeable circumstances, which would embitter all the future prospects of his life, and occasion his exile from his native country to end his days in a foreign one, at a distance from all the ties that held him to the world! Providence has mercifully drawn a veil before futurity, and placed the phantom, Hope, before it to amuse us. How miserable would be the drama of life could we but foresee the catastrophe!

When Lord Byron first engaged in the concerns of the theatre, he entertained some thoughts of employing his talents in the drama; but, as he himself tells us, he soon relinquished all idea of writing for actual representation. He could not bear the thought of descending to the drudgery of the stage; to submit his genius to the tasteless humours and caprices of the public; to pay court to the male, and adulation to the female performers; to write parts expressly suited to their different capacities and inclinations; and to cringe to them to obtain the favour of engaging them to perform their duty. He passed in review before his eyes the fate of preceding dramatists. Shakespeare enjoyed many advantages that none of his fellow labourers possessed; he was an actor by profession, and well versed in all the tricks of stage effect; he was a favourite with and well supported by his brother performers; yet he had but little fame in his day; the age was not sufficiently enlightened to discern the brilliancy of his genius; it was casting pearls before swine. Lansdowne and Dryden altered many of his plays to adapt them to the public taste. The originals were for a long time banished from the stage by the vile imitations, and it demanded all the talents and influence of a Garrick to restore them to their legitimate rank. It had even been asserted that few of the plays ascribed to him were wholly of his composition, and that of those few, it had become impos-

sible to separate what was, from what was not his own. Besides the players retrenched, transposed, added, and altered, to please the audience or to suit their own caprices. They either rubbed off much rust, or obliterated many beauties. It was only lately that it had been discovered that Shakespeare was superior to his age, teeming as it did, with dramatic writers; and yet how few, even of that boasted time, have survived, and still fewer of them keep possession of the stage! One of Massinger's, one of Ford's, one of Ben Jonson's, and about half a dozen of Shakespeare's: and of these last, "The two Gentlemen of Verona," and "The Tempest," have been turned into operas.* Shakespeare's comedies are quite out of date: many of them are quite insufferable to read, much worse to see. They are gross food, only fit for an English or German appetite; they are indigestible to the French or Italians, the politest people in the world. The French even contend that we have no theatre. They very properly ridicule our bringing in "*enfant au premier acte, barbon au dernier.*" Byron was a decided friend to the uni-

* With all deference to his Lordship's judgment, this is rather to be imputed to the present vitiated public taste, than to any want of merit in Shakespeare. This is the age of quavers, minims and crotchets, and we are a sing-song generation, seeking for amusement with our eyes rather than our minds. Show has banished sense; Shakespeare has yielded to scenery, decorations, and stage-processions; children, dogs, horses, elephants, have all enjoyed pre-eminence in this enlightened age.

ties, and maintained that it was absurd to contend that the preservation of them was not essentially necessary. It was difficult, almost impossible to write any thing to please a modern audience. There was a squeamishness that excluded the exhibition of many fine subjects from the stage; a squeamishness, the produce of a lower tone of the moral sense, and foreign to the majestic and confident virtue of the golden age of our country. All is now cant—methodistical cant. Shame flies from the heart, and takes refuge in the lips; or our senses and nerves are much more refined than those of our neighbours. *

The stage owed much to Kemble for his introduction of classical costume, which was almost wholly unknown before he introduced it, and the propriety was too obvious to be any longer a matter of question. Even Garrick used to perform Othello in a British uniform, and many other characters in prescriptive habits equally ridiculous.

* There is too much truth in these ideas of Lord Byron, but whilst we live in the world, we must conform to the taste of the world to ensure success. Shakespeare swam with the stream of popular feelings, and it carried him triumphantly into harbour. Byron strove against it, and was buried in the waves of oblivion. This failure of success must not be attributed to a deficiency of ability to write for the stage, but to his want of that *flexibility* which the *despotism* of *public taste* demands from every public character that sues for its approbation. It is an arbitrary tax that must be paid without investigating the question of right or wrong;—the *vox populi—suprema lex.*

His Coriolanus was inimitable, and he looked and personated the old Roman so well, that even Cato, cold and *stiltish* as it is, had charms for an English audience. This shews what an actor can do for a play. He pronounced several words affectedly, which should be cautiously avoided on the stage. The Greek derivation is much against his pronunciation of "*ache.*" * Kemble always *smelled* of the *shop;* when half seas over he used to speak in blank verse; he never for a moment resigned the mimic sceptre; he was King Richard the Third off as well as on the stage.

Mrs. Siddons was the *beau idéal* of the tragic muse; Miss O'Neil, Byron would never go to see, for fear of weakening the impression made by the queen of tragedians. When he read Lady Macbeth's part, he had Mrs. Siddons before him, and imagination always supplied her voice, whose

* The opposition that was raised against Kemble's pronunciation of the word "*aches*" as two syllables, "*a-ches,*" is fresh in the memory of most frequenters of the theatre of the present day. As a public character Kemble should have conformed to the taste of the public, although it is certain that the old English readings would bear him out in his new one. Spenser always uses the word "*aches*" as two distinct syllables, "*a-ches.*" It is, however singular that Lord Byron, in Kemble's case, as in the instance of Napoleon Buonaparte, which we have already noted, should have found fault with others for not conforming to the public opinion, which, in his own dramatic career, he wholly refused to be governed by. We see the faults of others, but are totally blind to our own.

tones were superhuman, and power over the heart supernatural.

Kean gave promise of future greatness even from boyhood; he began by performing King Richard the Third. His Sir Giles Overreach is a wonderful performance. The actresses all trembled before him, and he was so much exhausted himself that, after the performance, he fell into fits. The same thing also happened to Miss O'Neil. Dowton, who could not endure Kean, used to say that his Othello reminded him of Obi, or Three-fingered Jack; but whatever his Othello might have been, he was never surpassed by even Garrick himself in Iago.

Lewis was a pleasant companion, always a boy, and fond of the society of younger men than himself. Mrs. Pope once asked who was Lewis's male-love for the season. He possessed a lively imagination, and had a great turn for wonderful narrative and ghost stories, to which he had better have stuck, as his poetry is now almost forgotten. He was not a very successful writer. His "Monk" was attacked on the score of immorality by Matthias, in his "Pursuits of Literature," and it was suppressed in consequence. His "Abellino" was merely a translation. "Pizarro" was an inauspicious name to him, as it reminded him of an unfriendly *ruse de théâtre* that was played off upon him. It was *borrowed* by Sheridan, who

was not over scrupulous in applying to himself literary, or, indeed, any other kind of property, and who manufactured his play of that title from Lewis's, without an acknowledgment. Bad as *Pizarro* is, Byron recollected (from having been on Drury Lane Committee, in which situation he consequently became acquainted with the comparative profits of plays), that it brought in more money than any play ever before had produced. He fared rather worse with the *Castle Spectre*, which met with a prodigious run. Sheridan took care to go halves with him, taking all the profits, and leaving him the credit: nay, he even denied him much of that. Being in company together one day, Lewis offered Sheridan a large bet on some occasion. Sheridan (who was ever ready at a wager, which was all profit, if he won, and, at all events, no loss to him, as he never paid) eagerly asked him to name the sum. "'All the *profits* of my *Castle Spectre*," said Lewis. "I'll tell you what," replied Sheridan (who seldom found his match at a repartie), "I will bet you a *trifling* one, which is just the worth of it."

Sheridan was an extraordinary compound of contradictions; a puzzle to his friends and a plague to his foes. The upper part of his face was that of a god;—a forehead most expansive, an eye of peculiar brilliancy and fire; but below he sported the satyr. His character varied with the

time of the day. In the morning he was *Somnus;* in the afternoon *Sol;* and *Silenus* in the evening.

In what manner Lord Byron's *theatrical* and *matrimonial* careers ended together (the one giving the death-blow to the other) has been already fully detailed. The "*Jealous Wife*" was succeeded by "*The Devil to Pay,*" and, at the *drop of the curtain,* (it being the end of the *season),* the principal performer, Lord Byron, (being about to depart for the Continent), took leave of the *English stage* in a

"FAREWELL ADDRESS."

CHAPTER X.

Further Recollections of the Memoirs of Lord Byron, &c.—First Meeting of Lord Byron and Miss Millbank.—Description of that lady.—Offer of Marriage, first rejected, and then accepted.—The Wedding Day fixed.—The Fortune-Teller's Prediction.—The Wedding Ceremony described.—The Wedding Night.—Singular Dream.—TheHoney-moon eclipsed.—Byron refutes the charge of having married from interested motives.—Distress in High Life.—Temporary Separation.—Lady Byron, under parental influence, refuses to return.—Statement of the causes of Disagreement.—Mrs. C——'s insidious Conduct and ill offices.—Treacherous acts against Lord Byron.—Attempt to prove him a Lunatic.—Character and poetical Genius of Lady Byron, with Specimens of the latter.—Public outcry against Lord Byron.—His disinterested behaviour towards Lady Byron.—He again leaves England, never to return!

It was on a visit to Lady ——'s that Lord Byron and Miss Millbank first met. Byron stumbled as he went up stairs, and observed to his friend, Mr. Moore, who accompanied him, that it was *malum omen*. Miss Millbank was sitting in the room, so plainly attired as to attract the notice of Lord Byron, who mistook her for some humble

companion of the mistress of the house, and signified his suspicions to Moore, who corrected his error, by whispering in his ear that she was a great heiress, and adding his advice to make up to her, as the readiest means of repairing the old Abbey (Newstead).

Miss Millbank was rather what might be termed *piquante*, than beautiful; her features were small and feminine, without much regularity, but with the fairest skin imaginable. There was a native modesty and simplicity about her, very different from the masculine boldness of the fashionable world, and which could not fail of interesting a beholder in her behalf. His Lordship made the proper advances towards a further acquaintance, and becoming daily more attached to her, at length ventured to offer a proposal of marriage, which was declined, but not in so peremptory a manner as entirely to preclude all hopes. His Lordship suspected that the young lady was influenced to this refusal by her mother, who ever expressed a dislike towards him, and in this belief he was confirmed by the daughter's renewing the correspondence some months afterwards of her own accord, by a letter, in which she expressed a wish for his friendship, although she could not entertain a stronger passion for him; but friendship, as has been justly observed, is near a-kin to love. The correspondence, thus renewed, was

kept up briskly, until it ended in a treaty of marriage, and the happy day was fixed.

Byron's nativity had been cast by a Mrs. Williams, and the fortune-telling gypsy had foretold that *twenty-seven* was to be a dangerous epoch of his life. The second of January was a memorable —an eventful day! The parson mispronounced the name (Byrn); Lady Noel cried; Byron trembled like an aspen leaf; made the wrong responses, and after the ceremony, saluted his newly made bride (who was the only unconcerned person present) as Miss Millbank: it was a day of bad omens. Not the least singular circumstance was that of the wedding ring. On the very day that the union was agreed upon, a ring, that had belonged to Lord Byron's mother, was dug up by the gardener at Newstead, as if it had been destined for the celebration of the marriage of the son. The mother's marriage had not been a happy one, and the same ring was doomed to seal one still more unfortunate. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the *happy* pair set off for a country seat of Sir Ralph Millbank, and Lord Byron was not a little surprized and chagrined to find that a temporary separation was effected between him and the object of his ardent vows by the starch person of a lady's maid; but it was rather too soon to assume the husband, and he submitted, though not with a very good grace. It was said that Lord Byron, on getting

into the carriage, made use of a very inhuman remark,—"that he had married Lady Byron out of spite, merely because she had refused him twice;" "but," adds Lord Byron, "although I was for a moment vexed at her prudery, if I had made use of so ungallant, not to say brutal speech, I am convinced Lady Byron would have instantly left the carriage to me and the maid (the lady's maid!) She had spirit enough to have properly resented such an affront."

The rest of the day, no doubt, passed away heavy enough, and seemed very long to the parties most interested in wishing it to draw to a close; but how it was passed, we are left wholly to guess,—

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and we shall not endeavour to supply the chasm.

"It was now near two o'clock in the morning (proceeds the writer of the Memoirs), and I was jaded to the soul by the delay. I had left the company and retired to a private apartment. Will those, who think that a bridegroom, on his bridal night, should be so thoroughly saturated with love, as to render it impossible for him to yield to any other feeling, pardon me when I say, that I had almost fallen asleep on a sofa, when a giggling, tittering, half-blushing face popped itself in at the door, and popped as fast back again, after having

whispered, as audibly as a *suivante* whispers upon the stage, that *Anne was retired to rest!* It was one of her bride's maids. Yet such was the case. I was actually dozing. Matrimony begins very soon to operate narcotically;—had it been a mistress; had it been an assignation with any animal, covered with a petticoat—any thing but a wife—why, perhaps, the case would have been different.

"I found my way, however, at once into the bridal chamber, and tore off my garments. Your pious zeal will, I am sure, be quite shocked when I tell you that I did not say my prayers that evening—morning I mean. It was, I own, wrong in me, who had been educated in the pious and praying kingdom of Scotland, and must confess myself—you need not smile—at least half a Presbyterian. Miss N—l (should I yet say Lady Byron?) had turned herself away to the most remote verge, and tightly enwrapped her virgin charms in the superincumbent drapery. I called her by her name—her Christian name—her pet name—every name of endearment; I spoke in the softest under-tones, in the most melodious upper tones of which my voice was master. She made no answer, but lay still, and I stole my arm under her neck, which exerted all the rigidity of all its muscles to prevent the (till then undreamt of) invasion. I turned up her head—but still not a word. With gentle force I removed the close-pressed folds of the clothes from her fine form—

you must let me say that of her, unfashionable as it is, and unused as I have been to paying her compliments—she resisting all the while. After all, there is nothing like a *coup-de-main* in love or war. I conquered by means of one, with the other arm, for I had got it round her waist, and, using all my strength, (and what is that of a woman, particularly that of a woman *acting* the *modeste*, to that of a vigorous fellow who had cleft the Hellespont,) drew her to my arms, which now clasped her to my bosom with all the warmth of glowing, boiling passion, and all the pride of victory. I pressed my lips warmly to hers. There was no return of the pressure. I pressed them again and again—slightly at last was I answered, but still that slightly was sufficient. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.* She had not, however, opened her lips. I put my hand upon her heart, and it palpitated with a strong and audible beating under my touch. Heaven help it! it little knew how much more reason it would, ere long, have for more serious, and more lasting throbbings.

"As yet she had not uttered a word, and I was becoming tired of her obstinacy. I made, therefore, a last appeal. 'Are you afraid of me, dearest?' I uttered in a half fond, half querulous, tone. It broke the ice. She answered in a low, timid, and subdued voice—'no, I am not,'—and turned to me, for the first time, with that coy and gentle pressure which is, perhaps, the dearest

and most delightful of all sensations ever to be enjoyed by man. I knew by it that I had conquered.*

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"My sleep might have been profound, but it was, of course, not over long. I slept about three hours, which were sadly infested with dreams. I fancied that I had died, yet retained a puzzling sense of consciousness of existence. I seemed to be a sort of spectator of my own actions—to be looking at what the deceased Lord Byron was occupied about, yet, nevertheless, intimately blended and mixed up with all his actions. After my death, I descended to the infernal regions. The hell, into which I had entered, was not the orthodox depository for damned souls, nor was it the Miltonian region of sorrow and doleful shades; nor was it the Hall of Eblis, as in Beckford's *Vathek*; nor what would be, perhaps, more to be expected from my style of reading at the time, the Inferno of Dante, with its dread inscription of '*Lasciate ogni speranza.*' No, it was the old classical hell, with the grim ferryman that poets write of, in the full costume of the Æneid, or rather of an old

* The passages that are supplied by * * * may be better suggested by the imagination of the reader (particularly if a *female* one) than given in the sense of the original. *She* will, at least, give us credit for the omission: whether she may thank us for it or not, is another matter.

weather-beaten engraving of Tooke's Pantheon. I had no sense of apprehension about me; I was but a visitor, although disembodied. Like our old school-boy friends, Ulysses or Æneas, I was but on a cruize, in quest of infernal novelties. I crossed the darksome flood, in the leathern boat, ploughing through it like a sluggish stream of molten lava. I trod on the burning soil, and saw, through a long perspective of irregular fires, the smouldering rivers of unextinguishable flame. I perceived all the old company to whom I had been introduced by Dr. Drury at Harrow. Ixion, on his wheel, Sisyphus rolling up his endless stone, like Southey, labouring after interminable quartos, puffed up as uselessly, and doomed to as rapid a revolution down hill; Tityus, with his vultures, and he put me in mind of England, with her borough lords preying for ever on her entrails, while she still lingers on, and appears ever to suffer nothing in her constitution—and so on.

"As I had been presented to Ali Pacha, I had no scruple whatever of making my approaches to Pluto. He was sitting silent, in which he had much the advantage of most kings with whom I have the honour of being acquainted, for he thereby avoided talking nonsense; and by him sate his bride, pale, dark-haired, with melancholy eye, and conjugal detestation of her sovereign lord; she looked as if she would have no objection to an earthly lover. I approached her, me-

thought gallantly, and bowing reverently before her throne, with my right hand placed with an air of devotion on my breast, I said, 'Hail, Proserpine!'

"And, so saying, I awoke; but the influence of the dream was still strong upon me. The sound of my salutation rung in my ears, and the objects that met my eyes did not for some moments dispel the illusion. It was a clear January morning, and the dim, grey light streamed in murkily through the glowing red damask curtains of our bed. It represented just the gloomy furnace light with which our imaginations have illuminated hell. On the pillow reclined the head of my wife, with her face paler than the white cover which she was pressing; her hair had escaped from the night-cap, and it waved in long irregular tresses over her neck and bosom. She slept, but there was a troubled air upon her countenance. Altogether, that light—that cavern-like bed—that pale, melancholy visage—that disordered and dark hair—so completely agreed with the objects which I had just seen in my slumbers, that I started. I was almost going to continue the address, which, in the infernal realms, I had commenced. 'Hail, Proserpine!' was again upon my lips, but reason soon returned. Her hand casually met mine, and, instead of the monumental, marble-like coldness which should characterize the chill queen of Erebus—it was warm, glowing, melting, moist—it

was the hand not of a divinity, but of a much better creature—a beautiful woman. You may be sure it was not long"— * * *

to receive, and that was *twice* paid back. His own income at that period was small, and much encumbered. Newstead was a very unprofitable estate, and brought in barely £1,500 a year: the Lancashire property was hampered with a law suit, which had cost him £14,000, and was not yet finished.

On such slender means, and with barely sufficient for an outfit for a town establishment, they commenced with a house in London, had separate carriages, gave dinner parties, and launched out into the vortex of fashionable life, which soon engulphed the pittance of the marriage portion. The machinery soon gave way. Duns became importunate, and, at length, an execution was put into the house, and the bailiffs were put in possession of the very beds they had to sleep upon.* This was a most disagreeable state of affairs, and no very pleasant scene for Lady Byron to witness; it was, therefore, determined that she should pay a visit to her father, until the "pelting of the pitiless storm" was over, and some arrangement could be made with the creditors. The parting was on the most cordial footing, and Lady Byron wrote a letter to his Lordship on the road, beginning in rather a curious style, with "Dear Duck." It

* So complete was the sweep, that in an affidavit sworn in Chancery very lately, the valet, Wm. Fletcher, deposed to the loss of most of his own things, which loss Lord Byron undertook to make good to him.

was, therefore, no little matter of astonishment to Lord Byron to receive soon after a letter from Sir Ralph Millbank, beginning with a cold and formal "Sir," and ending with saying that his daughter should never see him again. In reply, Lord Byron disclaimed any such authority over his wife, and asserted his disbelief that she could harbour any such sentiments. Another post, however, brought him a confirmation (under her own hand and seal) of her father's sentence. Lord Byron was afterwards told by his valet's (Fletcher's) wife, who was at that time Lady Byron's waiting-maid, that after this resolution had been formed, and the fatal letter conveying it had been sent to the post-office, she sent to the post-office to recal it, and fell into hysterics of joy to find that it was not too late. This new resolve, however, did not hold long, as she was finally prevailed upon to forward it. There could be no doubt, therefore, that the persuasions of others overcame her affection for her husband. His Lordship, however, candidly confesses that there were some occasions in which he might have given cause for resentment. He had his prejudices respecting the fair sex: he did not like to see them eat like mere mortals. Rousseau complains that Julia was *une peu gourmande*.*

* It is now not only usual, but fashionable, for young ladies of the highest ton to eat like Aldermen and drink like mermaids. As to the dignified dames, or matrons of quality, wine is but water to them, and, therefore, they prefer whiskey. The *jackey-*

But that was not all that he required; he did not like to be interrupted while he was writing. Lady Byron did not attend to these peculiarities, and, on one occasion, happened to obtrude her attention at a most unfavourable moment. One evening, just before the separation, his Lordship was standing before the fire, contemplating the disagreeable state of his affairs, and some other little unpleasant circumstances, when Lady Byron said to him, "Byron, am I in your way?" In the moment of irritation, he suffered the answer, "D——bly"—to escape his lips, almost unconsciously, and for which he was instantly extremely sorry, as he perceived her Ladyship much hurt by it.

When a breach is once begun to be made, every little trifling thing widens it. Lord Byron was informed that a Mrs. C——t had sought to ingratiate herself with Lady Noel, by taking part against him, and was continually poisoning her Ladyship's mind; that she employed herself in watching his Lordship's motions in London, and even gave out that she had seen him enter a house in Portland-place. The malice of this petticoated friend did not end there, but was displayed by

bottle has made its way from St. Giles's to St. James's, and many a titled dame has reeled a waltz under the inspiration of *Hodges's best*. Other countries now begin to dispute our long asserted claim of superior morality, and, indeed, we believe that we ought to speak of it rather in the *past* than the *present* tense.

other acts unworthy of any one but such a toad-eater. His Lordship's writing-desk was violated. A book was there discovered which might have been more properly consigned to the flames, and some letters from a certain female, with whom his Lordship had maintained a correspondence previously to his marriage. The use that was made of the letters was full as unjustifiable as the means by which they had been obtained. They were sent to the husband of the lady, who had too much good sense to take any notice of them.

Matters were ripe for an explosion when Mrs. Mardyn's affair set fire to the train, and blew up the matrimonial citadel at once. From his Lordship's being one of the Drury Lane Theatre Committee, actresses were often in the habit of calling upon him on some affair or other. It was a natural consequence, but it was made a handle for the gravest charges against him. In Mrs. Mardyn's case there never was a more groundless calumny. It was alleged that his Lordship introduced her to his table, and intrigued with her in his own house, under her Ladyship's eye; but Byron declared, and persisted through life in the declaration, that though Mrs. Mardyn was a beautiful woman, and a dangerous one to any man, he had scarcely a speaking acquaintance with her. She was, however, the victim of unfounded jealousy, her character being blighted, and all her glittering prospects of fortune and professional

fame destroyed. The public have since been undeceived, and learned to do her justice. *

But there was one other instance in which such an outrage was offered to the feelings as few men could have borne with any degree of temper. Whilst Lord Byron was engaged in writing "*The Siege of Corinth*," shut up in his room, and abstracted from all the affairs of the world but the subject he was engaged upon, he was surprised at his citadel's being stormed by a *doctor* and a *lawyer*, whose visits appeared to him the more

* This beautiful woman, and once popular actress, has recently returned to her native country, after a voluntary seclusion of four years upon the Continent, during which she has visited various parts of Germany, Italy, &c., devoting herself to the study of their languages, and a cultivation of their literature. Lord Byron's repeated asseverations (in which he continued to his death) have happily cleared the character of this much injured lady in so decided and unequivocal a manner, that the most inveterate malignity can no longer venture a reflection. The slanderous rumour, which so long and cruelly coupled her name with that of Lord Byron, was, in its origin, a misapprehension wholly inexplicable. It is *now* proved that his Lordship never met Mrs. Mardyn out of the Green-room of Drury Lane Theatre, and even there scarcely ever noticed her beyond the mere compliment of a passing bow. Nevertheless, utterly unfounded as the rumour actually was, at one time it obtained so general credit, that both the reputation and the feelings of its innocent victim were outraged by it to the direst extreme. Mrs. Mardyn, upon her retirement from the stage, had realized, out of the profits of her brief but brilliant theatrical career, a genteel independence. She has no intention of accepting any new engagement.—*(Evening paper.)*

extraordinary, as he had no idea of their real object at the time. He thought the questions which they put to him were rather frivolous and impertinent; but how would he have felt if he had known that they had been sent for the express purpose of obtaining proofs of his *insanity!!* They might, no doubt, have discovered the

"Poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling,"—

and, perhaps, engaged and heated, as his mind was by the storm raging before the walls of Corinth, his answers to the interrogatories might not have been very consistent; but, after all, Dr. Bailey and the lawyer could not conscientiously make out his Lordship's title to a cell in bedlam.* It would have been a sure method of putting a stop to all fear of his Lordship's sallying forth upon any more catterwauling adventures. His Lordship did not, however, tax Lady Byron with being the author of this fine attempt. She might not have been even privy to it; but she was made the

* "For Inez called some druggists and physicians,
And tried to prove her loving lord was *mad;*
But as he had some lucid intermissions,
She next decided he was only bad:—
* * * *
* * * *
"She kept a journal where his faults were noted,
And open'd certain trunks of books and letters;
All which might, if occasion serv'd, be quoted:—"
Don Juan, stanzas 27, 28.

tool of others. Her mother detested him, and she had a decent sort of an auxiliary in Mrs. C——t, who, to do her ample justice, suffered nothing to escape her Argus' eye, nor scrupled at invention where facts failed her. Between them both the mind of Lady Byron was sadly warped, and she was induced to take many steps that would otherwise have never entered her head. She was a spoiled child, and naturally of a jealous disposition, which last circumstance made her an easy prey to the infernal machinations of her precious confidante. She thought her knowledge of mankind great beyond measure, and she was easily made the dupe of the designing; she entertained a similar foolish idea with Madame de Staël, that a person may be better known at first sight than in ten years. She drew her husband's character—it had only one fault—that it had not the least resemblance. She had some good ideas, but could never express them: she wrote poetry too—good or bad—as it happened.* Her letters were always enig-

* The reader will require no apology for introducing the following two specimens of her Ladyship's poetical abilities, as they have first appeared in a work published at Paris by a Madame Louise Swanton Belloe; they are above mediocrity, if not excellent:

TO ADA.

Thine is the smile and thine the bloom,
Where hope might fancy ripen'd charms;
But mine is dyed in memory's gloom,
Thou art not in a father's arms!

And

matical, almost always unintelligible. She affected to be guided by what she termed fixed rules and mathematical principles, and would have made an excellent wrangler at Cambridge. Of her boasted

And there I could have loved thee most,
  And there have owned thou wert so dear,
That though my worldly all were lost,
  I still had *felt* my life was *here!*

What art thou now?—A monument,
  Which rose to weep o'er buried love:—
A fond and filial mourner, sent
  To dream of ties, restored above!

Thou, dove! who may'st not find a rest,
  Save in this frail and shatter'd bark,
A lonely mother's offer'd breast,—
  May Heaven provide a surer ark.

To bear thee over sorrow's waves,
  Which deluge still this world below!
Till thou, through Him alone that saves,
  A holier Ararat shalt know.

Nor think me frozen, if for thee
  No *earthly* wish now claims a part;
Too dear such wish; too vain to me;
  Thou art not in a father's heart!

December 10, 1816. A. J. BYRON.

TO A FRIEND—(MISS D***).

Oh! pardon the heart which again would repose
  On the friendship it dreaded to need or to feel;
When nearest it found the most ruthless of foes,
  And its wounds from the hand it had died but to heal.

The

consistency, however, she gave no proof in her choice of a husband. First she rejected, and then accepted him; resolved on a separation; repented of that resolution; and, after all, confirmed it. All the obloquy of that measure was cast upon Lord Byron, and he was loaded with every opprobrious

The destroyer was there, and the root was consuming,
The sunbeams or dews touch'd the branches in vain;
And thus for thy love was no gratitude beaming—
And thus for thy tears all my answer was pain.

On the stream of the valley, if poison'd it rise,
The sweet flower may fall, but no sweetness prevails;
So the virtue of sympathy dwindles; but dies,
When the home-source of feeling in bitterness fails.

But all I rejected has pass'd not away;
The calmness assumed and the sorrow repress'd,
(When e'en thy affection would seem to decay)
That it might not reproach, whilst it sooth'd me to rest.

All these, unforgotten, are ever reviving,
To soften each trace, and each record of grief;
Though when present, alas! they were hopelessly striving
With evils, that banish'd the dream of relief.

Oh! think not forgiveness the sole vital spark
In a heart where are treasur'd the ashes of love;
Nor deem all the visions of memory dark;
There are those I might cherish in regions above!

Thou friend of the hour, which was thankless and cold,
If I feel for thee now what I then should have felt,
Oh! turn not away from the thoughts I unfold,
And withdraw not the smile which has taught them to melt!

A. J. Byron.

epithet that language afforded, or that history gave rise to. He *amused* himself with extracting from the journals the different worthies, ancient and modern, to whom he was supposed to furnish a parallel; Nero, Apicius, Epicurus, Caligula, Heliogabalus, Domitian, Henry VIII, and a certain *great personage.* All his former friends, even his cousin, George Byron, who had been brought up with him, and whom he regarded as a brother, sided with his wife against him. He followed the stream when it was strongest against him, and Byron declared, that as he could never expect, so he should never receive any benefit from him. He was represented as the vilest of husbands, the most abandoned of men, and his lady as a suffering angel,—an incarnation of all the virtues and perfections of her sex. He was abused in all the public prints—made the common tea-table talk—hissed as he went to the House of Lords—insulted in the streets, and exiled from the theatre, whence the unfortunate Mrs. Mardyn had been driven with insult. Amidst all this torrent of malevolent abuse, the proprietor of *The Examiner* newspaper, Hunt, was the only man that dared to offer a word in his defence, and Lady Jersey the only female in the fashionable world, who did not regard him as a monster. Byron had addressed some lines to her, on her being excluded from a certain cabinet of court beauties, which made her his friend for ever.

As an addition to all these accumulated misfortunes, his affairs were so irretrievably involved as almost to render him the wretch they wished to make him. He was reduced to the necessity of parting with Newstead Abbey, which he never could have ventured to have done in his mother's life time. Indeed, he never reconciled it to himself that he had done so, although it was allowed that the estate was sold to the best advantage. It was a step that was taken only from the last necessity. He had his wife's portion to repay, and had resolved to double it, as he actually did, out of his own money.

The moment he had put his affairs in train, and in less than eighteen months after his marriage, he left England a second time, an *involuntary* exile, without any intention, or, at least hope, of ever revisiting it.

After the *Memoirs* were completed, Lord Byron wrote to Lady Byron, proposing to send them for her perusal, in order that any mis-statements or inaccuracies might be pointed out and corrected. She declined the offer, without assigning any reason, but only her desire, if not on her account, for the sake of her daughter, that they might never appear, and concluding with a threat in case of disobedience. His Lordship's reply was the severest thing he ever wrote: he told her that she knew that all he had written was incontrovertible

truth, and that she did not wish the truth to be made known to the public. He ended by declaring that she might depend on the *Memoirs* being published. It was not till after this correspondence that Moore was made the depository of the MS. with injunctions, which he took care—*not* to fulfil!

END OF THE RECOLLECTIONS.

CHAPTER XI.

Extracts from various Letters of Lord Byron, explanatory of certain parts of his conduct, and illustrative of his opinions. —His Portrait, by Holmes.—His Reflexions on the striking coincidence of Southern's Tragedy of "*The Fatal Marriage*," with an eventful period of his own Life.—Anniversary of his Wedding Day.—Melancholy Reflexions on his Separation.—His advances to a Reconciliation rejected.—He prophecies his Death in Greece.—He deprecates the forming any judgment of him from his Writings.—Injustice of such a measure.—Immense profits of his Works.—Admiration of them in foreign countries.—Glenarvon, full of falsehood.—Madame de Staël, and the Germans misled by it.—Cain.—Byron's Defence of that work.—Parody on Southey's Vision of Judgment.—Southey's malignity, and Byron's generosity to Southey's brother-in-law, Coleridge.—Byron's Epigram on Southey.—His reflexions on Religion.—He is stigmatized as an Infidel; but declares himself a true Christian.—His Remarks on the injustice done to Pope.—His exemplary conduct in matters of Religion procures him respect in foreign countries.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Dallas was restrained (and undoubtedly very properly) from publishing Lord Byron's *confidential* correspondence with his mother and family, yet the public must regret that they should be withheld (at least for the present), as they contain the most exact delineations of as singular a character as ever existed. They would develope the natural expression of his feelings, at a time when he had no idea of their publication;

no view to the support of a character, which was not then established in the world, as pre-eminent in literary fame. They were, therefore, natural, familiar, and unrestrained. At a subsequent period, when his fame was blazed abroad, he became more careful of expressing his opinions, although, even then, he wrote what he thought without disguise, which he ever despised and detested as derogatory from the dignity of manhood. He was, in himself open, almost to a fault, and so great a stickler for truth, that his most intimate friends were obliged to be upon their guard with him; a want of candour would have deprived them of his good opinion without redemption. Fearless himself, and wholly independent of the world, he loved only the bold, manly, straightforward course; and his conversations and epistolary correspondence were a faithful index of his mind. It is to be hoped, therefore, that, at some future period, when delicacy towards certain individuals shall no longer oppose their publication, a collection will be made of these dispersed treasures, which will afford a mine of entertainment to the public.

Byron's letters are truly delightful, because they were never intended for publication; he never composed them with a view to their appearing in a half-dozen octavo or quarto volumes, in royal foolscap, with morocco bindings, as is the case with most other *letter-writing* ladies and gentlemen of the present day. He never sat down in

his closet to issue forth to the world in a sort of masquerade dress, and to pass off the lucubrations of the lamp for the unpremeditated effusions of artless simplicity. His letters were, therefore, a species of composition on which the utmost reliance may be placed for an insight into his real character and thoughts. His fancy kindled on paper, and as he touches on no common subjects, so he gave uncommon splendour to every thing he touched upon; the reader accompanies his sincerity with as sincere an admiration, fancies himself admitted into his most intimate society, admires his genius and frankness of disposition, and loves the man who lays himself and his inmost thoughts open to his inspection, without the least appearance of a wish to deceive. They are like his conversation, but in rather a better style; he took more time for reflection; he gave a freer scope to his humour, and, in the quiet moments of a sedentary employment, his irritable temper was more under controul. They are beautiful models from an original cast, in which every feature is expressed to the life. From a few of these letters (which have been kindly lent for perusal) such extracts are now given, as will explain and illustrate the most eventful passages of a life, every portion of which is now become a matter of intense public interest.

On the eve of Lord Byron's final departure from England, in April 1816, the portrait was taken of him of which a beautiful and correct

engraving is given as an embellishment to the frontispiece of the first volume of this work, being presented by his Lordship to a lady, who politely condescended to the request of a loan of it. The following is the inscription on the back of it:—

"THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
GEORGE GORDON BYRON,
LORD BYRON.
Painted by James Holmes, 12th April 1816."

Many portraits, which are any thing but likenesses of Lord Byron, have from time to time crept into circulation; of the present it need only be said, that as the accuracy of the miniature from which it is taken is placed far beyond a question, through the sanction it has received both from his Lordship and his friends, so likewise is the accuracy of the present engraved likeness unquestionable, since it is a true representation of the miniature; all who have seen Lord Byron and the miniature alluded to have instantly avowed the accuracy of the likeness; and this avowal is still further strengthened by the approbation and satisfaction which his Lordship expresses when, speaking of the same, he gives it as his opinion that it is the *best* ever taken; what more is wanting then, when Lord Byron himself speaks of this miniature in terms so strong as these? what more is wanting, after his Lordship's own opinion, to extinguish the doubts of the world, and to convince it that it has at last an accurate likeness of Lord Byron? Will his own hand-writing to

this effect be any greater confirmation? if so, even that will be found to accompany the present portrait, which in size, and indeed in every thing, is a precise copy of the original miniature; the circumstance, too, of its being the *very last* that his Lordship ever sat for—the last that was ever taken in this his own country, to which, as it were, he bequeathed it on the eve of his final departure—must immediately stamp it as the more interesting, and cannot but render it an invaluable present to the public, who, thus convinced of its faithfulness in every point, may fancy that it is in *full* possession of the very original itself. The sentiments, which his Lordship expresses respecting this portrait, are as follow, in a letter to a friend (with which we have been favoured), dated Genoa, 19th May, 1823. He says:

"A painter, of the name of Holmes, made (I think the *very best*) one of me in 1815 or 1816, and from this there were some good engravings taken. I enclose you a note to him for one of these. I assure you it will be better than any of the thousand things you have seen as portraits of the same subject."

Then proceeding with his letter and talking of names, he says—"By the way, Isabel has been one of no good omen to me, in former times, but at present we defy augury:

"Believe me again, and again,

"Your's ever, N. B."

"P. S. The "Isabel" neither "died nor was faithless," but she was—*my wife.* Is not the coincidence of names in the *dramatis personæ* of the "*Fatal Marriage*" a strange one? and yet no one has hit on the remark—*Anne-Isabella* is her name."*

Byron here alludes to Southern's tragedy of "*The Fatal Marriage,*" where the exiled husband's name is "*Biron,*" and the wretched wife's "*Isabella.*" A strange coincidence indeed! as Lord Byron remarks, and still stranger that no one else should have remarked it! How applicable to all the parties, in real as well as fictitious life, is the reflexion of the poet:

"If marriages
Are made in Heaven, they should be happier:
Why was I made this wretch?"—

On the 2d of January 1822, Lord Byron, being then at Pisa, expressed himself thus: "This is the most wretched day of my existence; and I say and do all sorts of foolish things to drive away the memory of it, and make me forget the occasion." After dinner one of the company proposed Lady Byron's health, which he drank with pleasure; and the conversation turning on the probability of a reconciliation, he exclaimed, "What! after having lost the five best years of our lives! never. It was through no fault of mine that we

* Of this extract there is a *fac simile* given in the frontispiece to the second volume of this work.

separated, and I have made advances enough. I once entertained an idea that people were happier in the marriage state, after the impetuosity of the passions had subsided; but that expectation is now all lost with me!"

On the occasion of Lady Noel's death, he put himself and all his suite into deep mourning; and he observed to a friend: "I am distressed for poor Lady Byron; she must be in great affliction, as she adored her mother. The malicious world will say that I am rejoiced at the event, but it is a great mistake. I never wished for an accession of fortune, and I have enough without the Wentworth property. I have written a letter of condolence to Lady Byron—you may suppose in the kindest terms, beginning, 'My dear Lady Byron.' If we are not reconciled—it will not be my fault."

On being congratulated on this happy prospect, he added: "No! Lady Byron will not make it up with me now, lest the world should say that her mother kept us asunder. Lady Noel certainly has identified herself with the quarrel, as she directs in her will that my portrait, shut up in a case by her orders, shall not be opened until her grand-daughter comes of age, and even then not given to her, if Lady Byron should be alive. I might have claimed all the fortune for my life, if I had chosen to do so; but I have agreed to leave the division of it to Lord Dacre and Sir

Francis Burdett. The whole management of the affair is left to their decision, and I shall not interfere, even to prevent their awarding Lady Byron the whole." When he heard that the referees awarded an equal partition, his Lordship offered Lady Byron the family mansion in addition to her share; but she declined it, *unkindly*, as his Lordship thought. He deemed all further efforts towards a reconciliation as fruitless, and tending only to his own humiliation; he therefore desisted; but, notwithstanding the air of jocularity with which he affects to speak, in certain parts of *Don Juan*, of his separation from his lady, it was evident that the reflexion was the bane in his cup of happiness that embittered every draught, and that he in vain resorted to every mode of filling up the void left in his soul by assuming a gaiety that was wholly foreign to it. Nothing could compensate for the want of those endearing ties and domestic comforts of which he was deprived; he wandered through the world like a weary pilgrim, without finding a single consolation or a place of rest. Switzerland, Italy, could afford him no enjoyment—were no places where his perturbed spirit could find repose.

The pangs which he felt on this occasion, were rendered more acute by the reflexion of the ill effects which the want of the superintending care of a father might produce on the education of his infant daughter. "They tell me that Ada is like

me," said he, looking at his daughter's miniature, "but she has her mother's eyes. It is very singular that my mother was an only child; I am an only child; Lady Byron is an only child; and Ada is an only child. I cannot help thinking it was destined to be; and whatever is, is best. I was once anxious for a son; but after our separation, I was glad it was a daughter; as it would have distressed Lady Byron too much to have taken a son from her, and I could not have left his education to her: I have no idea of boys being brought up under mothers. I suffered too much from it myself. And then, wandering about the world as I do, how could I have taken care of a child? I am told that Ada is a little termagant. I hope not; perhaps I am wrong in letting Lady Byron have her own way with her. I hear that my name is not permitted to be mentioned before her daughter; and that my portrait is kept concealed, to prevent her from knowing that she has a father, until she comes of age. Of course she will be brought up to entertain a bad opinion of me. Lady Byron is conscious of all this, and is apprehensive that I shall some day carry off her daughter by stealth or force. I might claim her by law without resorting to either. But I had rather be unhappy myself than be the occasion of making her so; for probably I may never see her again."

Every word of the preceding passages must

carry conviction to an unprejudiced mind, that the separation was not only involuntary on the part of Lord Byron, but extremely painful to his sensibility; that he made all possible advances towards a reconciliation, with the mortification of having them rejected or passed over unnoticed; and, that he did not desist until he despaired of success; the efforts of others to produce so desirable an event were equally unavailing. Lord Byron used to relate that Madame de Staël, when in England, took the greatest possible interest in his quarrel with Lady Byron, or rather Lady Byron's quarrel with him; and had some influence over her as much as any person, except her own mother, which was not saying too much. He believed Madame de Staël to have done her utmost to bring about a reconciliation between them. It was not until every effort had been made and failed to reconcile Lady Byron to her Lord (without which his return to England with honour and the prospect of happiness would be impossible), that he made up his mind to revisit Greece. "I mean to return to Greece," said he, "and shall in all probability die there." How truly prophetic these words were the world but too well knows!

In another of Lord Byron's letters, he deprecates the idea of a person's forming any judgment of him from his writings. "I pray you not to judge of me from my writings," he says,

" the world has done so for the sake of doing me wrong: and although the young and the enthusiastic have been on my side (or at least once were so), they have erred as much on the other part of the question."

Nothing can be more unjust than to pretend to draw the real character of the writer from his writings, since it is certain that to excite the attention and gain the applause of the public, an author must make his work a compound of all sorts of characters, by the contrasting of which he forms the lights and shades of his picture, which would otherwise be a disgusting monotony. Who, for instance, could bear the tedious, superhuman virtues of a Sir Charles Grandison without the seasoning of the rakish Lovelace? It is variety that gives the spirit, and the morality is the flavour of the piece. Petronius Arbiter and Juvenal (two of the most licentious satirical writers among the old Romans) were never charged by their contemporaries with being guilty of the vices which they lashed in Nero and his profligate court; the tyrant made the former pay for the exposure with his life, and banished the latter; a sure proof of their innocence! Suetonius wrote the lives of the Cæsars with as much licentiousness as they led them; but whoever thought of drawing his character from his writings? The ancients had more sense.

In the preface to " *Childe Harold,*" Lord

Byron states that a fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connection to the piece, and disclaims all identity of the hero with himself; yet his assertion was disbelieved, and he was accused of broaching immoral, irreligious, and levelling doctrines, inimical to the religion, morals, and government of his country! *Childe Harold* only exposes those superstitions, vices, and errors, which are the acknowledged blemishes of human nature, and which have employed the pens of satirists from the earliest ages. In his subsequent poems of "*The Giaour*," "*The Bride of Abydos*," and "*The Corsair*," (against which none of those charges could be attached), he is blamed for introducing misanthrophic, marauding, blood-thirsty characters, as the principal actors; and represented as being himself naturally of a gloomy, ferocious, and repulsive nature, detesting and flying from all the social ties that bind and endear mankind to each other. This charge was equally false; never was there a more humane, a more benevolent man than Lord Byron. His choice of subjects is a proof of his penetrating genius, without any of the least reference to his own character; he saw that all the paths in common use were so hacknied, that it was impossible for any writer to find a piece of untrodden ground; he looked around for a new soil, and he found it; what use he made of this newly discovered country will be best explained

by the sale and produce of his works, of which ten thousand copies have been disposed of in one day.

In a statement, lately given to the public, by Mr. Murray, the sums paid by him to his Lordship, at various times, for the copyright of his poems, are set down as follow:

Childe Harold, I, II.	£600
——— III.	1,575
——— IV.	2,100
Giaour	525
Bride of Abydos	525
Corsair	525
Lara	700
Siege of Corinth	525
Parisina	525
Lament of Tasso	315
Manfred	315
Beppo	525
Don Juan I, II.	1,525
——— III, IV, V.	1,525
Doge of Venice	1,050
Sardanapalus, Cain and Foscari	1,100
Mazeppa	525
Chillon	525
Sundries	450
	£15,455

With such testimonies of the public approbation before his eyes, Lord Byron might not only have asserted that the young and enthusiastic had been on his side, but he must have presumed that many of the graver cast must have derived some plea-

sure from the perusal of his works; nor was this flattering reception of them confined to his own country. Byron proudly observed that "they had been translated into all the civilized, and many uncivilized tongues. Several of them have appeared in Danish, Polish, and even Russian dresses. These last, being translations of translations from the French, must be very diluted. The greatest compliment ever paid him, had been shewn in Germany, where a translation of the Fourth Canto of '*Childe Harold*,' had been made the subject of a university prize." In addition to the above list, Byron's works have appeared in French, Italian, and Greek translations, making in all, with the English original; no less than seven languages,—a most rare, if not a wholly unprecedented honour!

The lady (of whom *honourable* mention has been made, as having engaged Lord Byron in a serio-comic intrigue), revenged herself for his indifference, by writing a novel that had some fame, in consequence of its professing to be a history of his life and adventures, character and exploits, mixed up with innumerable falsehoods, and lampoons upon other persons. Madame de Staël asked him if the picture was like him, and the Germans were absolutely persuaded that it was not a caricature. "One of my foreign biographers has tacked name, place, and circumstances to the Florence fable, and given me a principal instead

of a subordinate part in a certain tragical adventure. Unfortunately for my biographers, I never was at Florence for more than a few days in my life. Hence, however, an inference has been drawn that murder is my instinct, and to make innocence my victim and my prey, a part of my nature. I fancy that this dark hint must have originated from one of my notes to 'the *Giaour*,' in which I asserted that the countenance of a person dying by stabs retained the character of ferocity, or of the particular passion imprinted on it, at the moment of dissolution." A sage reviewer makes the following comment on this remark: "It must have been the result of personal observation!" This unfavourable opinion preceded him on his second tour; wherever he came he found it had become established. "At Geneva," he observes, "I lived a most moral life, but I gained no credit by it. Where there is a self-denial, there ought to be some recompense. But, there was no story so absurd, that was not circulated at my expence. I was watched through glasses from the opposite side of the lake, and through glasses that must have had very distorted optics. I was waylaid in my evening rides, I was accused of corrupting all the grisettes in Rue Basse. They regarded me as a new edition of the man-monster. Madame de Staël was fully possessed with an opinion of my immorality. Once, when I waited on her at Copet to partake of a *family* dinner, I found

the room full of strangers, who had come to have a stare at the outlandish wild beast. One of the ladies fainted or pretended to faint, and the rest looked as if his satanic majesty had popped in, among them. Madame de Staël took the liberty to read me a lecture before this assembly; to which I only replied by a low bow."

Lord Byron's subsequent works were so harmless that his enemies could find no flaws in them, and the outcry against him was dying away, when it was all at once revived with more fury than ever by the publication of "*Cain.*" It was dedicated to Sir Walter Scott, who betrayed no kind of dissatisfaction at it, until he found that the clamour of disapprobation was raised against the work, when he shewed it a Sir Pertinant Macsycophant kind of countenance, and, *boo-ing*, backed out of the intended honour. The story of the work was this: when Byron was a boy he began to study German, but he made very little progress in it. Abel was one of the first books his German master read to him; and whilst he was crying over its pages, Byron thought that any other than Cain would have hardly committed a crime in ridding the world of so dull a fellow as Gessner had made brother Abel. He always admired the subject, and determined to try his abilities upon it. How he meant to treat it, he himself tells us in the preface. Hobhouse denounced Cain as irreligious, and urged Byron not to print it, as he

valued his reputation, or his (Hobhouse's) friendship; and added that it reminded him of the worst bombast of Dryden. Shelley, on the contrary, averred that Cain was the best thing that Byron ever wrote, and worthy of Milton. His opinion carried the question against Hobhouse.

After the publication, Byron was much puzzled by the contradictory opinions which were sent to him respecting it. Moore said the world was more shocked at the blasphemy of the sentiments than pleased with the beauty of the poetry. Some thought the devil's arguments irrefutable, particularly the Liberals; but the Ultraists raised a terrible alarm, and the *he* and *him*, not being in capitals, shocked the high church and court party. He was an Atheist, a Manichæan, who had made his drama a peg to hang on it a long and tiresome dissertation on the principle of Evil; and, what was worse, with having given Lucifer the best of the argument, after the example of Voltaire.

"But," says Byron, "I could not make Lucifer expound the thirty-nine articles, nor talk as divines do; that would neither have suited his purpose, nor theirs. What would they do without evil in the *Prince* of *Evil?* Othello's occupation would be gone. I have made Lucifer say no more in his defence than was absolutely necessary, nor half so much as Milton makes his Satan say. I was forced to keep up his dramatic character. For the rest, I have adhered closely to the Old

Testament, and I *defy any one to question my moral!*

"Johnson, who would have been glad of an opportunity of having another hit at Milton, acquits him of any blame for putting impiety and even blasphemy into the mouths of his infernal spirits. Why am I then to bear all the blame? what would the Methodists say to '*Goëthe's Faust?*' His devil not only talks very familiarly of heaven, but very familiarly in heaven. What would they think of the colloquies of Mephistopheles and his pupil, or the more daring language of the prologue, which no one of us will venture to translate? And yet this play is not only tolerated and admired, as every thing he wrote must be, but acted in Germany. Are the Germans then a less moral people than we are?—I doubt it much."

In a letter to Murray on this occasion, he writes —"If '*Cain*' be blasphemous, '*Paradise Lost*' is blasphemous,—Cain is nothing more than a drama, not a piece of argument. If Lucifer and Cain speak as the first rebel and the first murderer may be supposed to speak, nearly all the rest of the personages talk also according to their characters; and the stronger passions have ever been permitted to the drama. I have avoided introducing the Deity, as in Scripture, though Milton does, and not very wisely either; but have adopted his angel as sent to Cain instead, on purpose to

avoid shocking any feelings on the subject, by falling short of what all uninspired men must fall short in, *viz.* giving an adequate notion of the effect of the presence of Jehovah. The old mysteries have introduced him liberally enough, and all this I avoided in the new one."

Here is a chain of argument, which the opponents of "*Cain*" may break through, if they can; if it does not wholly exculpate Byron, it, at least, proves that he is less culpable than all the ancient writers of mysteries; than Milton and Goëthe,—at all events, that he had no intention of offending morality, or the tender consciences of timid men.

The only other objectionable work of Byron's (or, at least, to which *legal* objections were taken) was his parody on Southey's "*Vision of Judgment.*" This was rather the natural child of passion, than the legitimate issue of a willing muse. The laurelled poet would not strike his flag to the Poet Laureate; the contest was unequal, and the latter was at length obliged to make sail to get away. It was an old grudge of some years standing, as Byron tells the story. The republican trio (Southey, Coleridge and Wordsworth), when they began to publish in common, were to have had a community of all things, like ancient Britons: to have lived in a state of nature, like savages, and peopled some island of the blest with children in common. A very pretty Arcadian notion! Byron offended the triad mortally on the following occa-

sion. He met at the Cumberland Lakes, Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd. He was pleased with Hogg, who wrote him some time afterwards a very witty letter, to which Byron sent a reply, in which he did not spare the Lakists. Hogg could not resist the temptation of shewing it to the *commoners*, and as Byron could never keep a secret of his own, much less that of other people, he did not blame him for the disclosure. When Byron compared the "*Botany Bay Eclogue*," the "*Panegyric of Martin the Regicide*," and "*Wat Tyler*," with the "*Laureate Odes*," and "*Peter's Eulogium on the Field of Waterloo*," he despised the apostacy, and he did not conceal his contempt. Southey, in a critique on "*Foliage*," a work of Leigh Hunt's, attacked Shelley, Byron and others, and was accused by Byron of having treasured up certain opinions of Shelley, spoken many years before, when he resided at Keswick, for the purpose of converting them into slanderous imputations against his character and morals; and the war, thus begun, was obstinately carried on, as has been already detailed. The quarrels of authors may amuse, but they are of very little consequence to the world. Byron's kindness to Southey's brother-in-law, Coleridge, might have taught him to be more temperate. When the latter was in distress, Byron borrowed one hundred pounds to *give* to him.

When Southey's reply to the note in the "*Two Foscari*" was first shewn to Byron, he was dread-

fully agitated, and talked of setting off instantly for England to demand satisfaction, repeating Southey's expressions of "whips," "branding-irons," "gibbets," and "wounding the heart of a woman." He was dissuaded from his intention by the representations of his friends, that his own expressions of "cowardly ferocity," hireling," "pitiful renegado," were equally personal and much stronger; but he sharpened his wits to take a more suitable revenge; and his parody on Southey's "*Vision of Judgment*" made its appearance, and raised such shouts of ridicule against the poor Laureate, that he was glad to leave the field to his adversary.

Byron finished the contest by an epigrammatic blow, which laid his antagonist prostrate at his feet; it was a parody on the following epigram from Martial:—

"Pierios vatis Theodori flamma Penates
Abstulit: hoc musis, hoc tibi, Phœbe, placet?
O scelus, ô magnum facinus, crimen que deorum,
Non arsit pariter quòd domus et dominus."

Lib. II. Epig. 94

The Laureate's house hath been on fire: the Nine
All smiling saw that pleasant bonfire shine;
But, cruel fate! Oh damnable disaster!
The house—the house is burnt, and not the master!

Enough has been shewn to prove that Byron's choice of subjects proceeded (as is usually the case with all poets), from the natural bent of his genius, or from fortuitous circumstances. No-

thing can be more erroneous, therefore, as well as unjust, than to pretend to draw his real character from the feigned ones pourtrayed in his works. He was neither irreligious, immoral, nor democratic; neither the Coriphœus of the satanic school, nor Satan himself, as Mr. Southey, and other canting drivellers would insinuate. A line should be drawn between the poet and the man—a line of truth; and, keeping that in view, Byron's character will not suffer, in comparison with that of any other of the fry of nobility that have ever preceded him. The middle road is ever the most equable and the safest; for there the judgment is less liable to go astray and bewilder itself in the labyrinth of passion on the one side, or of prejudice on the other.

On the subject of *religion*, in another of his letters, he writes to the following purport:—"I have not and never had the ambition of forming a sect; if I had, I think that I could have rivalled Whitfield, Luther, or Mahomet, for this simple reason, that it is not difficult to gather a congregation."

It is certainly not difficult to gather a congregation—(of *fools*)— in any country, in England especially; so that there was not much vanity in such an assertion, as any man, however illiterate, if possessed of sufficient effrontery and perseverance, or even any *old woman*, might make a similar boast; witness the late case of Joanna Southcott, whose deluded followers still hug the impos-

ture, although the impostor has been swept from the face of the earth. Credulity, superstition, and enthusiasm are the characteristics of the ignorant vulgar, and a Huntingdon will readily obtain more followers than a beneficed clergyman, or a bishop. It is only to throw up a hat, and a ring and stage is instantly formed; the quack mounts the rostrum (perhaps a tub or horseblock), and if his doctrines, however daring and absurd, be but advanced with sufficient confidence and effrontery (particularly if they are seasoned with a spice of abuse against the established church), he becomes a divine man,—a heavenly preacher,—the *champion* of the *elect!*

If Lord Byron was rather sceptical, it was upon some points in which there were many eminent characters in Cambridge to set him the example, and to keep him in countenance. Two of his most intimate friends, Matthews and Wingfield (whose premature deaths he laments in *Childe Harold*) were much bolder in entertaining and avowing their doubts. The former was drowned in the Cam; the latter died at Coimbra. He styled Matthews a person of gigantic intellect, superior to all other men he had ever known. He had a great friendship for Wingfield, whom he should ever regret; but he was merely a friend; but in Matthews he had lost a friend, a philosopher, a guide, whom he could have wished to have preceded to eternity. Matthews's genius was so

superior as to be above envy; Byron declared he was awed by him; there was the mark of an immortal creature in whatever he said or did; and that such a man should be consigned to an early death, confounded him. Yet, this man, who acquired university honours, was a confirmed *atheist*, indeed (as Byron acknowledged) *offensively* so, as he avowed his opinion in all companies. Byron admired the man, but condemned this open avowal of his disbelief; and, although he himself was rather sceptical, yet his most intimate friends aver that he never carried it to such lengths as to deny the divine origin of Christianity. He professed always to take great delight in the English cathedral service, which never fails to inspire every feeling mind with devotion; but he maintained that Christianity was not the best field of action for a poet, as it precluded him from many sources of inspiration which the metaphysics and anti-Mosaical doctrines offered to his imagination.

There was certainly much reason in this observation. No epic poets have been able to rival Homer and Virgil with their multiplicity of deities, and mythological machinery, which gave such variety to their every description. The scriptures shut up the Pantheon. Deprived of such numerous and powerful auxiliaries, the next race of poets, Dante, Tasso, Ariosto, Spenser, Milton, &c. called in others, and the world was peopled with enchanters, magicians, giants, dwarfs, flying grif-

fins, and other monsters, with enchanted armour, spears, swords, shields, and talismanic rings, which astonished and delighted the world, until the inimitable ridicule of Cervantes put all the shadowy host of airy nothings to flight. Pegasus was again shorn of his wings, and, instead of soaring in the upper regions, the poets were reduced to crawl upon earth. The present race, indeed, have made some late attempts to fly on metaphysical and rabbinical wings; but the enlightened public do not seem much to favour the revival of such antiquated and exploded reveries. The age of *speculative* philosophy is gone by; nought but the *practical* will now go down.

"No religion (observes Byron) has lasted above 2,000 years. The globe contains about 800 millions; not a fourth part are Christians: what is to become of the other three-fourths, and of those countless millions that existed before Christ? The best Christians can never be satisfied of their own salvation. Dr. Johnson died in terrors, and Cowper was nearly committing suicide. Hume and Voltaire died like men. A man may read till he believes all he reads. Creech died a Lucretian; Burchardt, Browne and Sale, were Mahommedans. Priestley denied original sin, and future condemnation, and Westley preached upon election and faith, and brought texts of scripture to prove both. People are mad too about missionary societies. The Catholic priests have been labouring for a

century, and what have they effected? Sir J. Malcolm said once at Murray's, that the pádres had only made six converts at Bombay, and that this little black flock forsook their pastors when the rum was expended; their faith evaporated with the fumes of the arrack. A still greater obstacle to the conversion of the eastern nations is the Christian doctrine of marriage. It will never be possible to persuade men who may have as many wives as they can keep to be contented with one; a woman is old at twenty in that country;—what then is a man to do?" Speaking of Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, he expressed himself not convinced by his arguments. "It is not," said he, "a matter of volition to unsettle belief,—to unlearn all that one has been taught in one's youth, or to think that some of the best men that ever lived have been fools. I have often wished that I had been born a Catholic; their purgatory is a comfortable doctrine,—an improvement on transmigration; I wonder the reformers gave it up, without substituting something as comfortable in its stead. I don't know why I am considered an enemy to religion, —an unbeliever. I have disowned Shelley's metaphysics, and the notes to Queen Mab, which I was accused of having a hand in composing; yet I am considered an infidel! A Mr. Mulock, a preacher, on the continent, of orthodoxy in politics and religion, a great anti-materialist, and opponent

of Locke, a writer of bad sonnets, and lecturer of worse prose, endeavoured to convert me to some new sect of Christianity. The women, too! my wife and sister, when they joined parties, sent me prayer books; and a Mr. Sheppard sent me a prayer made for my salvation by his wife just before her death. I like devotion in women. She must have been a divine creature, and I pity the man who has lost her. Yet I shall write to Mr. Sheppard to condole with him, and to assure him that Mrs. Sheppard need not have entertained any concern for my spiritual affairs, as *no man is more of a Christian than I am*, whatever my writings may have led her and others to suspect."

It is evident, from the foregoing passages, that Byron entertained some doubts; but who among us has not done the same thing? Who can help it—and what crime is there in it? Byron professed himself an admirer of the service of the Established Church of England; he declared that no man was more of a Christian than himself; and yet he is stigmatized as an infidel! Such insolent intolerance, and brutal bigotry are disgraceful to Christianity. Byron expressed his contempt and detestation of such conduct in Pope's case, when he undertook his defence against Bowles. "Of all the disgraces that attach to England in the eye of foreigners, who admire Pope more than any of our authors (though it is the fashion to decry him among ourselves), the greatest, perhaps, is—that

there should be no niche assigned to him in Poet's Corner. I have often thought of erecting a monument to him at my own expense in Westminster Abbey, and hope yet to do so. But he was a Catholic, and, what was worse, puzzled Tillotson and the divines. That accounts for his not having any national monument. Milton, too, had been very nearly without a stone, and the mention of his name on the tomb of another was at one time considered a profanation to a church. The French, I am told, lock up Voltaire's tomb. Will there never be an end to this bigotry?"

Byron, probably, had a *presentiment* that he himself should furnish another example of this intolerant bigotry, in having his remains excluded from the repository of departed *orthodox* poets; although there is scarcely a better poet, and many a worse man to be found among the collection. But the time will—must come, when mankind will be convinced that they have a real interest in investigating the truth; and when the inquiry will be encouraged, instead of being stifled by penal statutes, fines and incarcerations. Truth needs no such props; it can stand alone. A free and enlightened government will rather carry conviction to the minds than use coercion over the bodies of the people. There is pleasure in the one; in the other there may be danger.

In matters of religion Byron was exemplary; he paid respect to the public worship of whatever

country he visited; and the respect which he shewed to others, was returned to himself. It was this conduct that made him beloved by the Roman Catholics in Spain, Portugal, Italy; by the Greek Christians in Greece, and by the Mahomedans in Turkey; in short, by every one and every where—but by the intolerant bigots in his own native country!

CHAPTER XII.

Continuation of Extracts from various Letters of Lord Byron, explanatory of certain parts of his conduct, and illustrative of his Opinions.—His aristocratic spirit derived from his Scotch Education.—His superstitious belief attributable to the same source.—His daughter, Ada.—Dr. Polidori's Death.—True Account of the publication of "*The Vampyre.*"—Byron's economical Freak.—The feminine Aristocracy.—All pretty Women belong to Nature's *Noblesse.*—Anecdotes of Madame de Staël and the Ex-Queen of Sweden.—Byron's Amours.—The Guiccioli, and account of her Portrait, given as an embellishment to 3rd vol.—Byron's Opinions respecting Women.—His paradoxical Conduct.—Description of his Person and Mode of Life.—His Portrait by Phillips, and another in his Albanian Costume.—Hints to his daughter Ada.—Respectful attention of the Greeks to Byron's Memory.—His cynical Disposition caused by the neglect or ingratitude of others.—The Earl of Carlisle.—Mr. Southey.—Mr. Dallas.—The present Lord Byron.—Reflexions on the whole.

BEING taxed by a lady with having a leaven of aristocratic pride in his composition, he writes to her in answer:—"It is also very true that I am, as you say, aristocratical, and, perhaps, bigoted lyso on the whole; but the cause is, partly, that I am half a Scotchman,—and you are aware that the clannish and family spirit makes a part of their

education; at least, it did of mine. But I have always found that the feminine aristocracy did not depend upon birth and rank, but rather on the age and appearance of the peeress, as all pretty women belong to Nature's *Noblesse.*"

Byron, naturally enough, attributes his hereditary pride to his early bringing up in Scotland, where it is (or rather lately was) in luxuriant growth. Every duty, moral and political, was among the Highlanders, absorbed in affection and adherence to the chief. "Not many years have elapsed (says Dr. Johnson) since the clans knew no law but the laird's will; he told them to whom they should be friends or enemies, what kings they should obey, and even what religion they should profess." It is certain that the Highlanders esteemed it a most sublime degree of virtue to love and adhere to their chief; and, next to his love, is that towards the particular branch from which they sprang; and, in a third degree, towards the whole clan or name, whose cause is at all times espoused against those with whom they are at variance. The castle of the Scottish chieftain was a kind of hospitable and open court, in which every individual of his tribe or clan was ever welcome, and where he was sure to be entertained according to his station in time of peace, and the rendezvous to which all flocked at the sound of war. Thus the meanest individual of the clan, conscious that his birth was as noble

as the head of it, respected, in his chieftain, the spirit of his own honour; loved, in every member of his clan, a portion of his own blood,—felt not the difference of station to which Providence had decreed him, but respected himself as a part of a noble and powerful body. The chieftain, in return for this willing homage and strict union of interests, bestowed an unbounded protection, founded equally on gratitude for important services, and the consciousness that it all resulted to his own interest and stability of power. This explanation may lead to an insight into many points in the character of Lord Byron, which might not be otherwise well understood. Born an aristocrat, he confessed himself to be naturally one in temper. Many parts of his "*Hours of Idleness*," particularly his "*Farewell to Newstead Abbey*," evince the early pride he took in the glory of his ancestors. He used to relate, with indignant feelings, that the commander of a British sloop of war made the captain of his yacht haul down his pennant. "They might have respected the name of the great navigator (said he). In a time of peace, and in a free port, there could have been no plea for such an insult. I wrote to the captain of the vessel rather sharply, and was glad to find that his first lieutenant had acted without his orders, and whilst he was on shore; but, as they had been issued, they could not be countermanded." From his earliest in-

fancy, like the Highlanders amongst whom he passed it, he was remarkable for independence of spirit, which a long minority, and the indulgence of maternal fondness, contributed to strengthen. His character much resembled that of an ancient Highland chief, described in Ossian's (or Macpherson's) Poems:—"When the haughty come to my halls, I behold them not; but my arm is stretched forth to the unhappy." Irritable on very trifling occasions, he never retained his anger long. Impatient of control, he was too haughty to enter into a self justification when right, or to own himself in the wrong, when really so; yet no man was more open to conviction when he deemed the reproof to proceed from real friendship, and motives of affection and regard.

To the early excursions which he took through the Highlands of Scotland, may be likewise attributed much of that ardent love for the romantic and picturesque scenery of nature, undisturbed by art, and that attachment to solitude and a wandering life, which made his friends apprehensive, at one time, that he would have wholly renounced society, and led a sort of gypsey, vagrant, life, as would inevitably have been the case, by his own confession, if the declining health of his mother, and the perplexed state of his affairs, had not compelled him to return to England. In the Highlands, too, he had picked up no small

portion of that superstition which induced to the foolish belief that the Divinity has communicated to some persons a portion of his prescience. As the occupation of the Highlanders was principally tending cattle in wide and extensive moors, and their journies lay over unfrequented mountains, where they were frequently obliged to sleep amidst the roaring of the blasts and the deafening noise of falling cataracts, it was not surprizing that the awful gloom of the scenes around them produced that melancholy of mind which lays it open to the impressions of superstitious awe. He sees a spirit in every cloud or mist, and in every breeze of wind he hears the "voice of the dead." Byron's strength of mind could not resist this impression, which was confirmed by Mrs. Williams (the fortune-teller), predicting that *twenty-seven* was to be a dangerous age for him, and it was the year of his marriage! One day he said, "This is Ada's birth-day, and might have been the happiest day of my life, but as it is, I shall not be happy till I hear she is well. I have a great dread of anniversaries; people only laugh at those who keep no records of them. I always write to my sister on Ada's birth-day; I did so last year, and, what was very remarkable, my letter arrived on her wedding-day, and her answer reached me on my birth-day. Several extraordinary things have happened to me on my birth-day; so they

did to Napoleon, and a still more wonderful circumstance happened to Maria Antoinette. I expect to hear of the death of some acquaintance."

The next morning he received a letter announcing the death of Dr. Polidori, in London, through a dose of his own prescription. Disappointment caused the rash act, having entertained too sanguine hopes of literary fame and profit, owing to the success of the "*Vampyre*," which, in consequence of being ascribed to Byron, was got up as a melo-drame at Paris. The foundation of the story was Byron's, but he disowned the publication lest the world should suppose him guilty of the egotism of speaking of himself, in the manner the writer of the letter attached to it does.* Byron's real "*Vampyre*" he gave at the end of "*Mazeppa*," just as it was told one night at Diodate, when Monk Lewis, and Shelley, and his

* It is to be observed that Byron does not disavow the account of his residence at Mytilene, he only disclaims being the writer of that letter. The account we believe to be strictly true; and we much doubt whether such a letter, as that contradicting it, was ever sent by Byron to Galignani; or he might have been imposed upon, as is very likely from Byron's own account of him:—"When Galignani," said Byron, "was about to publish a new edition of my works, he applied to Moore to furnish him with some anecdotes of me; and it was suggested that we should get up a series of the most unaccountable and improbable adventures to gull the Parisian and travelling world with; but I thought afterwards that he had quite enough of the fabulous at command without our inventing any thing new, which indeed would have required ingenuity."

wife were present, as has been already related. When Byron read the account of Polidori's death, he exclaimed: "I was not oppressed in spirits last night without cause. Who can help being superstitious? Scott believes in second sight. Rousseau tried whether he was to be damned or not by aiming at a tree with a stone. Goëthe trusted to the chance of a knife's striking the water, to determine whether he was to prosper in some undertaking. The Italians think the dropping of oil betokens ill luck. Pietro (Count Gamba) dropped some the night before his exile, and that of his family, from Ravenna. Mrs. Williams told mine: she predicted that *twenty-seven* and *thirty-seven* were to be dangerous periods of my life. One has come true. (He was married in his 27th and died in his 37th year!) She prophecied too that I was to die a monk and a *miser;* but I do not think these two last very likely." However in this last instance, too, the fortune-telling witch happened to pitch upon the right guess. "In one of his moments of gaiety," said Capt. Trelawney in a letter to Col. Stanhope, "two years back, he could think of nothing which could give him so much pleasure as saving money, and he talked of nothing but its accumulation, and the power and respect it would be the means of giving him; and so much did he indulge in this contemptible vice, that we, his friends, began to fear it would become his leading passion; however, as in all

his other passions, he indulged it to satiety, and then grew weary." He once offered to bet Capt. Hay that he would live on £60 a year!! His yacht, for which he gave £1000, he sold for £300, and refused to give the sailors their jackets. Dining at a trifling expense on hermit's fare when alone; spending hundreds with his friends; miserly in trifles, and lavishing his whole fortune on the Greeks! Ever in the extreme.

The idea in the preceding extract respecting the feminine aristocracy, and that "all pretty women belong to Nature's *noblesse*," proves that, in spite of the humble opinion into which his keen disappointment of the first passion of his heart had forced him, respecting the whole sex, he paid due homage to those charms to which all mankind bow the knee. Byron possessed, in an eminent degree, whenever he chose to be at the trouble to exert it, the art of making himself agreeable to the fair sex, even while he affected to underrate their mental qualifications. When Madame de Staël was first brought into contact with him, she took no little pains to attract his notice, which Byron observing, took care to disappoint. Failing in her endeavours, she told him (alluding to "*The Prisoner of Chillon*") that the Swiss nation owed a compliment to the greatest bard of England. "One," replied Byron, "from Madame de Staël is quite sufficient," and, bowing, left the room. When

Byron was in Switzerland, the Ex-queen of Sweden determined on doing him the honour of a visit. One of her suite represented to her that such a condescension would be too great, and that she should signify her pleasure that the English bard should be presented to her. "That," replied the Ex-queen, "would do away with the distinguished honour which I wish to pay to his merit." Byron being apprized of the Ex-queen's intention, anticipated her visit, and confirmed her in the opinion which report had given her of his merits. The lady of Seville, the Turkish girl at Athens, and the Guiccioli, in Italy, are all instances of Byron's captivating graces. The portrait of this latter lady, given as an embellishment to the third volume of this work, is from a spirited drawing made under Lord Byron's immediate inspection, and being sanctioned by his approbation, and the only one in existence in this country, it will, it is hoped, be deemed an appropriate and acceptable offering to the public. The Guiccioli is now about twenty-five years of age, although she has a much younger look. Differing from most of her country-women in that respect, she is very fair. Her eyes are large, dark, and languishing; her hair of dark auburn, curling on her head, and falling on her shoulders in a profusion of ringlets. She is rather too much *enbonpoint* to be deemed an elegant figure; but she is graceful, and her features possess a Grecian outline of beauty,

which is considerably heightened by the beauty of her mouth and teeth. Her voice is perfectly musical, and the melody of her utterance, and the softness of the Italian language give an indescribable charm to all she says. Grace and elegance are her peculiar characteristics; and although she affects an ease which it is not difficult to guess the exile and poverty of her family, render foreign to her heart, yet even this shade of melancholy does not fail to add an interest in her favour to all she says or does. Her conversation is sprightly without frivolity; and, without the affectation of being learned, she has made herself acquainted with all the best authors in her own and the French languages. Byron was greatly attached to her without being actually enamoured. His description of the Georgioni in the Manfredi palace was intended for her. He wrote "*The Prophecy of Dante*" at her request, and inscribed the dedicatory sonnet to her. She had heard of his having written something about Tasso, and thought Dante's exile and death would prove a fine subject. Byron went to Ferrara to visit the dungeon; Hoppner accompanied him, and the greater part of the poem was composed (like "*The Prisoner of Chillon*") in the prison. He had, however, as he confessed, a more extensive view in writing that poem, than to describe either the exile or grave of Dante; he looked forward to the political resurrection of

Italy—he indulged in the dream of liberty. Alas! it was only a dream! If Byron had wanted any other reason for abandoning the prophecy, the prophecy failed him. It was expected at one time, that the flame would have extended over all Italy; but it ended in smoke, and the poem expired with it. The Italians, however, are enthusiastic in their admiration of Dante, the poet of liberty. Neither persecution, exile, nor the dread of death in a foreign land, could shake his constancy. There is no man, nor well educated woman in Italy, that cannot quote all the finer passages of the favourite author. The Guiccioli could repeat almost all the "*Divine Comedy.*" Byron often listened to her with raptures. He called her his *Piccinina*, and many other diminutives that sound so sweetly in Italian. A three years' constancy proved that he was not so intractable as might be supposed; no man was more easily led—but he was not to be driven. A sensible woman might manage, but she could never make a dupe of him.

Byron used to say that "his mind had something of an Asiatic twist in it;" and this was more particularly the case with respect to the fair sex. "Women," he observed, "have ever been fated to be my bane. Bonaparte, with his *gardez vos enfans*, could not exceed me in my contempt for them; and this opinion was formed not rashly, but from my own fatal experience of them. My

writings, indeed, tend to exalt the sex, but I drew them as a painter or statuary would do—not as they are, but as they should be. My prejudices, and the distance at which I kept them, perhaps, contributed to keep up the illusion and prevent my discovering their divine qualities. With us they are out of their element. The Turks and Asiatics manage these matters better. They immure them, and they are much happier; give a woman but a looking-glass and a few sugar-plums, and she will be satisfied. I have suffered from the sex ever since I can remember. I began by being *jilted*, and ended by being *unwived*. Those are the wisest who have neither mistress nor wife."

Yet, with all this prejudice, it would be difficult to point out any period of his life, after his arrival at manhood, which was utterly destitute of some attachment to the fair sex. The wounded pride of disappointed passion rankled at his heart; yet Nature was too powerful to be driven out of her hold, and, while he affected such utter contempt for women, there was always some idol or other to whom he was offering up his incense. What is man but a mass of incongruities!

The next two extracts, from Byron's letters, relate to his age, health, habits of body, and their effects upon his mental faculties.

"I have fortunately thirty and five good years, (as you may find by the dates in the *Red-Book*),

and, besides these *thirty-five* years in the body, I have *seventy* in my soul, and, as nearly as I can guess upon a moderate calculation, at least *forty-five* or more in appearance."

"I have not been very well occasionally this winter, but am better now, though a good deal *thinner* than I have been since I left England, which is so far an advantage as I had rather been too *legitimately* tending the other way for these last three years; but have now subsided back to my former more meagre outline, at least for the present."—April 16th, 1823.

There was somewhat of a constitutional defect in Lord Byron from his birth; he never enjoyed a sound state of health. He made the best of it, however, and his youthful excursions amidst the wilds and over the bracing moors of the Highlands, contributed much to its improvement. In a more advanced age he retarded the progress of hereditary disease by the sanative exercises of rowing, swimming, and riding on horseback, to which latter he was much attached, as it in a manner concealed his lameness, and he was an excellent horseman. Yet, with all these precautions to keep together a crazy frame, and the additional advantage of much travelling, he grew old before his time, and the wear and tear of his mind, by his own account, outstripped that of his body in arithmetical proportion. He was about five feet seven or eight inches in height, and, at

the date of his letter, thirty-five, though, as he says, apparently forty-five years old. His face was fine,* especially the lower part, which was curved, after the Grecian outline, and set off with good teeth, which he took the greatest pains to keep in order. He chewed tobacco, either for that purpose, or as a habit generally acquired by those who are much at sea. His forehead was somewhat high and broad; his hair fine, thin, and at that early period of life, almost grey; waving in curls over his head, and falling down behind in rather a feminine way. He had also begun to encourage the growth of mustachios. His eyes were of a greyish brown, sparkling with the fire of animation, which bespoke his own internal inspirations, while they seemed to dive into the thoughts of those to whom he was either speaking or listening. His hands were finely shaped (as Ali Pacha remarked), and, so careful was he of them, that he wore gloves, even

* A sculptor of the name of Thurwalsen, chiselled out Byron's bust at Rome, and was from 1817, to 1821, employed about it;—Byron sitting to him at various periods. It was of pure marble, and, when finished, given by Byron to Hobhouse; it is reckoned the most accurate ever taken of the kind. Chantrey, at the request of Douglas Kinnaird, took a copy of it in marble for Kinnaird himself, in which a few alterations were made to soften the expression; but, as Chantrey observed, *not* to *improve* it; it was a whim of Byron's friends to do so, nothing else; because Thurwalsen's was esteemed by Byron complete and thoroughly finished.—Many have coveted this bust, because it is the best ever chiselled.

in the act of swimming. As his countenance was open and expressive, so was his *tout ensemble* manly and prepossessing. He was so sensible of the striking effect of a good exterior, that he always took care to display himself to the best advantage. He never failed to appear remarkable, and, whether in speaking, acting, or dressing, no one could be in his company, or pass him in the street, without being sensible that he was not a person of the common order.

Such a constitution required the utmost care and regularity to keep it in any thing like good order; but Byron was as irregular in his dietetic regimen as in every thing else. At one time he would indulge in all the pleasures of a professed gourmand; at another he would live upon eremitical fare, a vegetable diet. Sometimes he almost wholly abstained from all strong liquors, and at others indulged to a degree of intemperance. He could carry off a great quantity of liquor without betraying the effects of intoxication, and was by no means particular as to the sort or quality of the fluids he drank; but he was never a habitual drinker, and could be as abstemious in that respect as any man on the face of the earth; only, when the wind sat in that quarter, he sailed along with it, and indulged in that, as in every other whim, to *satiety*. ..

A similar irregularity pervaded all his motions, his exercises and journies; it was a capricious

compound of indolence and activity. There was no medium with him; it was either a state of torpidity or a whirlwind—a tornado. It was scarcely possible to get him out of a place in less than six months; scarcely possible to keep him any longer in it. He easily imbibed a disgust either at a residence or a pursuit. Just previous to his quitting Pisa, and after the catastrophe that befel Shelley and Williams, he gave up the amusement of sailing, and never again set foot on board his yacht, which he sold. He also relaxed into habits of indolence, and almost wholly discontinued his usual airings on horseback. As his digestion became weaker through want of exercise, he starved himself into an unnatural *thinness*, of which he takes notice in his letter. In order to restore the stamina, he indulged somewhat too freely in wine, and in his favourite beverage, Hollands, of which he drank a pint every night.

A crazy constitution is not easily kept in repair, without any accidental circumstances happening to accelerate its decay. Byron's feelings were most painfully sensible and irritable; his body was a load to his mind; and his mind was a fire that consumed his body; the one was continually wearing out and undermining the other; and both together were hastening to a premature dissolution. On his first tour, he was near losing his life at Patras, a miserable, unhealthy, swampy bog; and when he began to think seriously of returning

to Greece, he felt a presentiment that the Turks, or the *malaria*, would terminate his existence there. This really happened at Missolunghi; but whether from the effects of an epileptic fit, brought on by irritation of mind, or of an inflammatory fever from a cold, is rather uncertain. Byron's irritability was the fault of his education, too customary with those who have been brought up to the servile obedience of obsequious attendants. If he had passed his life at home amidst his tenants and dependants, like other young noblemen and country gentlemen, perhaps he might have found many less occasions to ruffle a temper naturally not the most quiescent; but he spent the greater part of it in travel and adventure, surrounded by foreigners, jealous of his fame and of his nation; and, unquestionably, he had often opportunity to discover that his early education had unfitted him for dealing with mankind on an equal footing, and his aristocratical hauteur from submitting his will to that of others with patience. The stubborn, intractable, ungovernable spirit of the rugged Suliotes brought on an epileptic fit, and undermined the frame which fell an easy prey to the fever. On inspection of the body, however, after death, there were evident symptoms of a speedy dissolution by a natural decay. Therefore, upon a due consideration, the friends of Lord Byron, whilst they deeply regret his loss, ought to feel rejoiced, for the sake of his fame, that he died in the midst

of a career of glory, which was calculated to secure to his memory the eternal gratitude of Greece, and the esteem and admiration of the whole world.

In reference to a print taken from a painting of himself by Phillips, Lord Byron writes as follows: "As to the print of me, be assured that it is *not* like, if it ever were so; for ten or twelve years—some passion—travelling—and not the best of tempers, have given me an aspect much more paternal than pleasing, since that was taken from Phillips's picture, I suppose. You should have seen the one in my Albanian garments, which my lamented mother-in-law bequeathed by her will to be locked up till my daughter attains the age of twenty-one years (that is, for the next fourteen years to come), which is much more corsairic and sentimental."

Lord Byron's portrait was painted by Phillips, and also by Westall; they were each good of their kind, that is, as paintings, though differing greatly in execution and expression. In Phillips's, the predominating sentiment appeared to be that aristocratic hauteur, to which Lord Byron himself pleaded guilty; Westall's was more dignified, calm and sober; but, as has been already shewn, above all others, Byron himself infinitely gave the preference to the one painted for him by Holmes, in his English full dress,—the court dress of Charles the Second, and the dress of his native England: the one in

his Albanian costume, appears also to have been somewhat of a favourite of his; that however was designed for his family, from which it is nevertheless absurdly locked up, and in consequence concealed also from the public. Had we not Holmes's portrait and Byron's, several testimonies concerning its accuracy, and the preference he gives to it, we might possibly regret this concealment.

The first glance at Albania and the Albanese struck Byron forcibly with the resemblance to the Highlands of Scotland and the Scotch Highlanders, a country and race of men to him endeared by early habits and acquaintance. Not only he himself, but Dr. Holland, and many other British travellers, have noticed this similarity. Byron fancied himself at once *at home* and amongst old friends. He courted the intimacy of the Albanians, and they attached themselves to him with much ardour. The Albanian costume is at once picturesque and elegant, being simple and leaving their limbs unincumbered. The most remarkable peculiarities are, the external mantle, falling loosely over the shoulders, and reaching down behind as far as the knees —made of a coarse brown woollen stuff, but bordered and variously figured with red-coloured threads: the two vests, the outer one open, descending to the waist, and occasionally made of green or purple velvet; the inner vest laced in the middle, and richly figured; a broad sash or belt

round the waist, in which are fixed one and sometimes two blunderbusses, and a large knife; the handles of these blunderbusses are often of great length, and curiously worked in silver; a coarse cotton shirt coming from beneath the belt, and falling down a short way below the knees, in the manner of a *Scotch* kilt, covering the drawers, which are also of cotton; the long sabre, the circular greaves of worked metal, covering and protecting the knees and ancles; the variously coloured stockings and sandals; the small red cap, which just covers the crown of the head, from underneath which the hair flows in great profusion behind, and in front is shaved off, so as to leave the forehead and temples entirely bare. To this general description may be added the capote, or great cloak, one of the most striking peculiarities of the Albanese dress,—a coarse, shaggy, woollen garment, with open sleeves, and a square flap behind, which serves occasionally as a hood, the colour sometimes grey or white, so as to give the appearance of a goatskin thrown over the back. Such is the costume of an Albanian, in which, Byron's attachment to these faithful guides, guards, attendants and *nurses*, induced him to have his portrait drawn,—to be a memento of him to his daughter. We know not with what eyes she may be taught to view it when the prescribed time arrives for submitting it to her inspection; it is to be hoped, however, with those of reverence and affection, as all the

Milbank property and the Wentworth property, and the title into the bargain, will never be so estimable a jewel in her cap as the being the sole descendant of Byron, the bard of England, and the benefactor of Greece! How highly she is honoured on *that account* the Greeks have already given a demonstration. They have sent to say that they have adopted Ada, the daughter of their beloved Byron, as a daughter and citizen of Greece, and hope to see her among them to testify to her in what gratitude, admiration, and reverence, they hold the memory of her glorious father.

Byron, as we before observed, was a lively writer of letters, and in general talked more of *persons* than of things, which, although it shews more of the man than of his opinions, yet it is calculated to do much harm, or, at least, cause much disturbance during the lives of the individuals; such sentiments, for the sake of peace, it is as well to pass over for the present. We, therefore, content ourselves with extracting but one of such paragraphs, as a palliative to the cynical disposition for which he has been upbraided, wherein, speaking of the ingratitude of one whose family had been greatly indebted to him in various ways, and about whom *infinitely more* could be quoted from his letters than what follows—he proceeds thus:

"And yet, with *not one*, but a hundred in-

stances, more or less, of the same kind—people wonder that I am cynical. Here is the descendant of a fellow who had about two thousand pounds at different times through my means, who actually makes a boast of disliking the man, who never did his family aught but good."

Never did man begin life with more of the milk of human kindness in his nature than Lord Byron; but it was soon curdled into acidity by an unparalleled succession of untoward events. Deserted by his father in his earliest infancy; exposed to poverty, with a defect of nature, and a sickly constitution, his spirit was soon called into play by the rude jeers of his juvenile contemporaries at the public school in Aberdeenshire. At Harrow he was obliged, on the same score, to fight his way against all opposition. In his first passion he was cruelly jilted. At Cambridge, himself and his *bear* were made the standing jests, until he took ample revenge by his two satires of "*Thoughts suggested by a College Examination,*" and "*Granta.*" The first effusions of his muse were most severely and unjustly handled by the Edinburgh critics and witlings of the day, until his "*Epistle to the Scotch Reviewers and English Bards*" did him justice, and set them to rights. Having done this, he returned to his natural feelings of peace and good-will with all those who extended the hand of friendship to him. He made it his

boast—" It is remarkable that I should at this moment number among my most intimate friends and correspondents those whom I most made the subjects of satire in " *English Bards.*" I never retracted my opinions of their works—I never sought their acquaintance; but there are men who can forgive and forget." One thing, however, he himself, although he might forgive, never could forget; the unkind treatment of his guardian and relative, the Earl of Carlisle, from whom he might have expected and received the most powerful and useful support on his entrance into life. He solicited his patronage for the firstling of his muse, and received only a frigid and repulsive answer. Overlooking that circumstance, he informed him of his intention to take his seat in the House of Lords, with a view to having the offer of his introduction; but he obtained only a cold notification of the etiquette usual on such important occasions. Being thus disappointed in his most sanguine expectations, he determined not to subject himself to the risk of a similar mortifying repulse from any other quarter, and he exhibited the uncommon appearance of a young nobleman making his *entrée* into the House of Lords, unsupported by a single brother peer. This occasioned so unfavourable an impression to be excited against him (being deserted by his nearest friends), that

with all his native courage and energy, he could never afterwards surmount it; and after satisfying himself by making a display of his abilities in some speeches (which, from his taking the Opposition side of the question, met with but little support), he quitted the pursuit of politics in disgust. That, however, he attributed much of his failure in this respect to the cold and repulsive treatment of the Earl of Carlisle, he evinced on many subsequent occasions. Once, reading in the newspapers, some lines of his Lordship's composing, advising Lady Holland against having any thing to do with a snuff-box left her by Napoleon Buonaparte, for fear lest murder should jump out of the lid every time it opened, and commencing—

"Lady, reject the gift, &c."

he parodied it with his usual exquisite humour, thus:—

"Lady, accept the box a hero wore,
In spite of all this elegiac stuff:
Let not sev'n stanzas, written by a bore,
Prevent your ladyship from taking snuff."

Byron used also to repeat an epigram, composed (but whether by himself, or not, is uncertain) on the occasion of his Lordship's performing two acts in one day, *viz.* subscribing *one thousand pounds*, and publishing a *sixpenny* pamphlet!

> " Carlisle subscribes a thousand pound
> Out of his rich domains;
> And for a six-pence circles round
> The produce of his brains:
> 'Tis thus the difference you may hit
> Between his fortune and his wit."

Now, it is apparent that in all the above cases, Lord Byron was either the object of the first aggression, or suffered under some mortifying disappointment or neglect. With the exception of the Earl of Carlisle, Mr. Southey was the only person almost against whom he retained his animosity; and he justifies himself for doing so by Southey's own example. " The Laureate," says Byron, " is not one of that disposition ' who can forgive and forget,' and exults over the anticipated death-bed repentance of the objects of his hatred. Finding that his denunciations or panegyrics are of little or no avail here, he indulges himself in a pleasant vision as to what will be their fate hereafter. The third Heaven is hardly good enough for a king; and Dante's worst birth in the " *Inferno* " hardly bad enough for me. My kindness to his brother-in-law might have taught him to be more charitable!"

It might, and it ought to have done so. But, as Byron observes in the last preceding extract, there were others whom he had laid under obligations to a much greater amount, who made a very

ungrateful return for so much gratuitous kindness. Mr. Dallas, on the strength of a matrimonial alliance between some branches of his and Byron's family, introduced himself to his acquaintance on the first appearance of his "*Hours of Idleness*," and, presuming on his acquaintance with the literary world, took upon himself the censorship of his Lordship's writings, to which his Lordship for a time yielded submission, and presented Mr. Dallas with copy-rights of some of them, to the amount of upwards of *two thousand pounds*, so that Mr. Dallas was tolerably well recompensed for his advice. Byron's fame, however, upon the publication of "*Childe Harold*," became elevated to such a pitch, that nothing but the utmost arrogance could have led Dallas to expect that his consorship would be any longer agreeable. But he carried his presumption still further, and even ventured to interfere with his Lordship's management of his own private affairs. His Lordship was pressed by his legal adviser, and the embarrassment of his affairs, to sell Newstead Abbey, which Dallas bitterly inveighed against. He wished it to be retained in the family, because the *heir apparent* (in case of failure of issue male of Lord Byron) was his *own nephew;* that nephew, too, was his Lordship's cousin, George Byron, who had been brought up with him, and whom he loved as a brother. "But (as Lord Byron observed) he followed the stream when it was

strongest against me, and can never expect any thing from me: he shall never touch a sixpence of mine." This was on the occasion of the matrimonial rupture, which, together with the perplexity of his affairs, compelled the sale of Newstead Abbey. Yet, for this disposition of a property over which he had unlimited control, and which he was compelled in fact to sell, is Lord Byron charged with an injustice, an infringement against all *moral* right, for leaving the family title without the family estate to support it. Mr. Dallas's *nephew* should have known in what situation he stood respecting his cousin, Lord Byron, and, if he expected any thing from his bounty, should, at least, have maintained silence, whatever might have been his opinion of his conduct. The sale would not, perhaps, have been so much reprobated if it had not gone to enrich—not Lord Byron's own daughter—not Mr. Dallas's *nephew*—but Lord Byron's *half-sister;* there was the grievance; but where was the injustice? Lord Byron's daughter was provided for to satiety; and his half-sister was nearer in blood than his cousin, and was, besides, the mother of *eight* children, almost wholly unprovided for. Byron's conduct, therefore, in this instance, was natural and strictly justifiable. Yet, with Mr. Dallas, the disinheriting his nephew wholly effaced the gratuitous donations made him by his Lordship to the amount of upwards of *two thousand pounds.*

A wet sponge is an excellent receipt for a debt of gratitude!

Taking the brief retrospective glance at the continued succession of untoward events that befel Lord Byron, there will be little occasion to wonder that his Lordship was *cynical*. Many in his situation would have been much worse; few would have been better. Byron acknowledges the charge of being *cynical*; but, true to the right feelings of nature, he never suffered his principles nor his prejudices, however erroneous they might have been, to sink him into the odious passion of misanthropy. If he had faults, the greatest of mankind have been ever liable to them; it is a weakness of human nature, and we should make such allowances for a Byron, as the very best amongst us, are, at some periods or other of our lives, obliged to crave for ourselves!

CHAPTER XIII.

Lord Byron's Character misunderstood, or misrepresented.—Though emulous of Fame himself, he was not envious of it in others.—His Opinions of eminent Literary Characters.—Moore.—Scott.—The Great Unknown, and the Scotch Novels.—Washington Irving.—Dallas.—Rogers.—Hobhouse.—Trelawney.—Shelley.—Keats.—Millman.—Heber.—The Reviewing Squad.—Leigh Hunt.—Coleridge.—Wordsworth, and Southey.—The *Lakists* in a rapid decline.

NEVER was character more misunderstood, or more misinterpreted than that of the subject of these biographical memoirs! His foibles were those of education, and a natural timidity and shyness, the consequence of a want of early introduction into that rank of society, to which he was so suddenly and unexpectedly elevated. His temper was, as he acknowledges, aristocratical, and yet he wanted the firmness and confidence to support the character with dignity,—his heart was kind and benevolent; yet he was ashamed of betraying its feelings, as if humanity were a weakness—he could not exist without friendships; and yet he was too proud to let his friends imagine that they were necessary to his happiness; never was man more ardently attached to the fair sex, and yet he affected to despise them; he lived but

in the sunshine of public admiration and applause; and though from irritation, or to display an independence of spirit, he acted in opposition to its received opinions, yet no man was ever more alive to its censure. The flippant hypercriticisms of a few insolent reviewers and journalists he mistook for the general sense of the nation; he believed himself to be an object of detestation, and in return, he *fancied* that he despised his country; yet no man was more sincerely attached to it; its admiration was his only aim; its prosperity, superiority, and glory, his constant theme, his boast, his pride! The disgraceful convention of Cintra, and the congress (or rather conspiracy) at Verona, always stuck in his throat as national disgraces. The latter pursued him wherever he went; he saw its dreadful effects in the sacrifice of Venice to Austria; it haunted him at Pisa, and pursued him to Genoa. It was the real cause of his dislike to Castlereagh and Wellington. Great Britain, when she had the power in her hands, should have insisted on the absolute independence of Italy.

Byron's vanity, or to give it a milder, and, perhaps, more appropriate term, his love of fame, was excessive; but it was erroneous, as well as ungenerous, to attribute to him that inordinate thirst for it, as to wish to monopolize it all to himself. It has been stated that he was exorbitantly desirous of being the sole object of interest,

whether in the circle in which he was living, or in the wider sphere of the world, he could bear no rival; he could not tolerate the person who attracted attention from himself; he instantly became animated with a bitter jealousy, and hated, for the time, every greater or more celebrated man than himself; he carried his jealousy up even to Buonaparte; and it was the secret of his contempt of Wellington. It was dangerous for his friends to rise in the world; if they valued his friendship more than their own fame, he hated them. All this is a gross misrepresentation. Eager as was his appetite for fame, the consciousness of his own excellence set him above the meanness of envy or jealousy; and he was ever ready to give to every candidate for popular applause his due share of merit. True, as he himself acknowledged, he was rather *cynical*, even in speaking to, or concerning his most intimate friends; but they knew him, and that it was rather the indulgence of a natural propensity than a consequence of any envy, jealousy, or malignant wish to depreciate. He could not refrain from displaying his wit, but he had no heart to inflict a wound. His opinions of contemporary authors will be the best test of his powers of discrimination of their respective merit, and the justice he was ever ready to do them. His quarrel with Moore, and the mode of its adjustment has been already detailed. "We have

since," said Byron, "ever been the best friends in the world. There is no man I correspond so regularly with as Moore." Among the circle of his acquaintance, perhaps, there was not one who was more suited to allay his irritation, or to cheer up the despondency of mind, to which his Lordship was so subject, as Moore. He was, as Byron said, too social a soul to be insincere, and possessed of too independent a spirit to render it necessary for a man to be on his guard against him. When Byron was asked whether it was true, as had been suspected, that Moore assisted Lord Strangford in his translation of "*Camoen's Poems*," and other effusions: Byron denied it. "They are great cronies," said he, "and when Moore was embarrassed by his Bermuda affairs, in which he was not well treated, Lord Strangford offered him £500; but Moore had too independent a spirit to lay himself under an obligation. I know no man I would go further to serve than Moore." At another time, speaking of his poetical genius, he expressed himself in the following terms: "Moore is one of the few writers who will survive the age in which he so deservedly flourishes. He will live in his '*Irish Melodies*;' they will go down to posterity accompanied with the music; and both will last as long as the world will retain a taste for poetry and music." A more unqualified praise could not have been bestowed by one man on another, and that other, too, the only man in

his age and country, who, as is universally acknowledged, could ever enter into any competition or rivality with his encomiast, in the popular approbation. A more forcible refutation could not have been given of the calumny, that he hated those friends who endeavoured to attract any attention from himself. He also has given another remarkable instance of his generous mode of speaking, concerning another eminently successful writer and candidate for popularity, Sir Walter Scott. In a letter addressed to M. H. Beyle, Rue de Richelieu, Paris, dated Genoa, May 29, 1823, respecting the publication of a work, intitled "*Rome, Naples, and Florence, in* 1817," by M. Shendhal,* and some other literary productions, Lord Byron expresses himself in the following terms: "There is one part of your observations in the pamphlet which I shall venture to remark upon; it regards Walter Scott. You say that 'his character is little worthy of enthusiasm,' at the same time that you mention his productions in the manner they deserve. I have known Walter Scott long and well, and in occasional situations which call forth the *real* character—and I can assure you that his character is worthy of admiration—that of all men he is the most *open*, the

* An extract from this work, respecting the author's introduction to Lord Byron at Venice, has been already given in vol. i, pages 398, *et seq.* His Lordship recognized the author as a Milan acquaintance, in 1816.

most *honourable*, the most *amiable*. With his politics I have nothing to do; they differ from mine, which renders it difficult for me to speak of them. But he is *perfectly sincere* in them; and *sincerity* may be humble, but she cannot be servile. I pray you, therefore, to correct or soften that passage. You may, perhaps, attribute this officiousness of mine to a false affectation of *candour*, as I happen to be a writer also; attribute it to what motive you please, but *believe* the *truth*. I say that Walter Scott is as really a thorough good man as man can be, because I *know* it by experience to be the case." After two such remarkable instances, it would be superfluous to give any more: but it was not only to those authors with whom he maintained a friendly correspondence, that he rendered justice, he observed the same conduct towards those whom he disliked, on account of their connections, and against whom he had just grounds to complain of ingratitude. Coleridge for instance, whom he could not separate from Southey, and, speaking of whom, he said: "I hope Walter Scott did not write the review of '*Christabel*,' for he certainly, in common with many of us, is indebted to Coleridge. But for him, perhaps, '*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*' would never have been thought of. The line

'Jesu Maria shield thee well!'

is word for word from '*Christabel*.'

Speaking of Walter Scott's genius, Byron said—"Of all the writers of the day, Walter Scott is the least jealous: he is too confident of his own fame to dread the rivalry of others. When Scott began to write poetry, which was not at a very early age, Monk Lewis was the corrector of his verse, as he understood little then of the mechanical part of his art. The Fire King, in the "*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*," was almost wholly Lewis's. He spoiled the fame of his poetry by his superior prose. He has such extent and versatility of powers in writing, that, should his novels ever tire the public, which is not likely, he will apply himself to something else, and succeed as well."

Being interrogated whether he was certain that the novels of the *Great Unknown* were written by Scott; he answered: "Scott indirectly owned himself the author of '*Waverley*' to me in Murray's shop. I was conversing with him about that novel, and lamenting that its author had not carried back the story nearer to the period of the Revolution. Scott, entirely off his guard, said, 'Aye, I might have done so, but——.' There he stopped. It was in vain to attempt to recal his words: he looked confused, and relieved his embarrassment by a precipitate retreat. At another time, I was to dine with Murray; and, being in the parlour conversing together, he told me I should meet the author of '*Waverley*' at dinner. The party was but a small one, and, knowing the

peculiar qualifications of every one present, I was perfectly satisfied that the writer of that novel must have been, and could have been no other than Walter Scott.* I never travel, (added he) without Scott's novels; they are a library in themselves—a perfect literary treasure. I could read them once a year with new pleasure."

On another occasion he said that Washington Irving was the next best prose writer to Sir Walter Scott; and that so long as he continued to write *con amore*, and confined himself to the scenery of his native transatlantic country, he would preserve his well-earned reputation; but that if he ever became a writer for pay, and transferred his attention to cisatlantic subjects, he would dwindle into the mass of common writers, and descend gradually from his present lofty station. Subsequent events have proved this judgment to be well founded; and "*The Tales of a Traveller*" have

* It is said that Lord Byron afterwards wavered in his opinion, that all the novels of the *Great Unknown* were *exclusively* written by Sir Walter Scott. The rapidity with which they were brought forth, occasioned some doubt that Sir Walter Scott only furnished the sketches and gave the finishing touches, and that all the fillings-up were executed by subordinate workmen, whom he designated as '*Constables' Staff-Corps.*' The question seems of little importance at present, for, as Sancho Panza says—"Greediness bursts the bag." The public is nearly cloyed with the sameness of repetition; and if the mine be not nearly exhausted, the ore is so much debased that it will soon not be worth bringing to the mint.

much diminished the reputation of the author of "*The Sketch Book.*"

Mr. Dallas has accused Lord Byron of want of sincerity in his professions, and of being incapable of real friendship. "I am not singular," says he, "in the cooling of his friendship, if it be not derogatory to call by that name any transient feeling he may have possessed. In the dedications of his poems there is no sincerity; he had neither respect nor regard for the persons to whom they are addressed; and Lord Holland, Rogers, Davies, and Hobhouse, if earthly knowledge becomes intuitive on retrospection, will see on what grounds I say this, and nod the recognition; and I trust forgiveness of heavenly spirits, if heavenly spirits theirs become, to the wondering poet with whose works their names are swimming down the stream of time."

The public may require some better evidence of Byron's want of sincerity than Mr. Dallas's bare assertion; but it will receive the charge as full proof against himself of want of gratitude. He was known to be a man not over-burthened with the good things of this life, at the time when he introduced himself to Lord Byron, merely on the strength of some matrimonial alliance, and to have received, through his means, above £2,000; his own arrogant pretensions and unsolicited interference in his Lordship's private concerns, deprived him of his friendship; and his selling Newstead

Abbey, instead of suffering it to devolve to Mr. Dallas's nephew, procured him his enmity. The world may hence judge whether insincerity were the characteristic of Lord Byron or Mr. Dallas. Byron knew how to form a judgment of mankind, and to distinguish between professions and real attachment. He was not to be misled by *l'usage du monde;* words were not demonstrations with him; he looked further into the heart of man.

Hearing some one speak slightingly of Mr. Rogers's "*Pleasures of Memory*," he asserted that the work would live. "I remember," said he, "being delighted with it when I was at Harrow, and that is saying a great deal, for I seldom read a book when I was there, and I continue to like what pleased me at that time." It being still objected that there was not a line of the poem that had not been altered, till it would be difficult to detect in the patchwork any thing like the texture of the original stuff: "Well," rejoined Byron, "and what does this prove but the general merit of the whole piece? People act the wisest part who take care of their own fame when they have got it. A contrary conduct has been the rock on which I split. It has been said that he has been puffed into notice by his dinners and Lady Holland. Though he gives very good ones, and female Mæcenases are no bad things now-a-day, it is by no means true. Rogers has been a spoiled child; no wonder that he is a little vain and jea-

lous. And yet he deals out praise very liberally sometimes; for he wrote to a little friend of mine, on the occasion of his late publication, 'that he was born with a rose-bud in his mouth, and a nightingale singing in his ear:'—two very prettily termed orientalisms! Before my wife and the world quarrelled with me, and brought me into disrepute with the world, Rogers had composed some very pretty commendatory verses on me; but they were kept corked up for many long years, under hope that I might reform, and get into the good graces of the world again; and he hoped that the said lines (for he is rather costive, and does not like to throw away his effusions), might find a place in "*Human Life.*"*. But, after a great deal of oscillation, and many a sigh over their hapless fate—their embryo destiny—they were hermetically sealed, and my apotheosis adjourned *sine die.*"

There may have been something *cynical* in this remark, but the loss of immortality is too great to

* Mr. Rogers's costive muse has at length been delivered of "*Human Life,*" after a painful time, and Lord Byron suffered little loss of fame by the *commendatory* verses on him being omitted, as it would never have carried him down to posterity, or even to the next generation. It is a direct and palpable plagiarism on Gay's "*Birth of the Young Squire;*" and far—very far indeed, inferior to the original in every respect—save in prolixity. There, indeed, we have a repetition—as if there could not be too much of a *good thing*, without any respect to the old Latin adage—"*ne quid nimis.*"

be easily borne; it shews, however, that Byron was possessed of more shrewdness of observation, than the world generally gave him credit for, and that he could dive into the secret recesses of the human heart. He was aware that some friendships are not *à toute épreuve*; but held as subordinate to the received maxims of the world. But he could make allowances for circumstances, and he knew that Mr. Rogers was not so independent nor so reckless of the world's opinion as himself; and that he was, besides, of too sensitive and timid a disposition to wish to draw any part of the opprobrium, with which the world loaded him, upon his own head. "Rogers has an unfortunately sensitive temper," said Byron, "and is easily put out of sorts; but these things are, as Lord Kenyon said of Erskine, mere spots on the sun. He has good qualities to counterbalance these littlenesses in his character. He is, besides, the only man I know, who can write epigrams, and sharp bone-cutters too, in a couple of lines; for instance, that on a M.P. who had reviewed his book, and given it as his opinion, that he wrote very well for a banker:

> "They say he has no heart—but I deny it;
> He has a heart—and gets his speeches by it."

It has likewise been reported, "that, although Lord Byron was not ill-tempered nor quarrelsome, still he was very difficult to live with; he was ca-

pricious, full of humours, apt to be offended, and wilful. When Mr. Hobhouse and he travelled in Greece *together*, they were generally a mile *asunder*; and though some of his friends lived with him off and on a long time (Trelawney for instance) it was not without some serious trials of temper, patience, and affection. He could make a great point often about the least and most trifling thing imaginable, and adhere to his purpose with a pertinacity truly remarkable, and almost unaccountable." Whether or not Mr. Dallas was the author of this tirade, it seems to have been given on his authority; for he used to say that when Lord Byron had lost his companion (Hobhouse) at Constantinople, he felt great satisfaction at being *alone*. Now Mr. Dallas's real reasons for bespattering the memory of Lord Byron have been already detailed, and will be fully appreciated by the public; he had reasons too for abusing Mr. Hobhouse, and *substantial* ones, as the latter, in capacity of one of the executors of Lord Byron, prevented him from putting some hundreds of pounds into his pocket by publishing Lord Byron's confidential correspondence with his family. But with what truth the above assertion is made let the public judge from the facts themselves. The friendship between Byron and Hobhouse, commencing at an early period of life at Cambridge, was continued through twenty years, in England, and in foreign parts, and terminated, with one,

only by the hand of death, and will never be erased from the memory of the other but by the oblivion of the grave. Trelawney's attachment, too, bore the same *genuine* stamp. So much for falsehoods gratuitously foisted upon the public!

Let us hear what Byron himself speaks of Hobhouse, which will be much more to the purpose: "Hobhouse is the oldest and the best friend I have. What scenes we have witnessed together! Our friendship began at Cambridge. We led the same sort of life in London, and travelled in company great part of the years 1809, 1810, and 1811: He was present at my marriage, and stuck close to me in 1816, after the separation. We were at Venice, and visited Rome together, in 1817. The greater part of my "*Childe Harold*" was composed when we were together, and I could do no less in *gratitude*, than to dedicate the complete poem to him. Hobhouse's "*Dissertation on Italian Literature*" is much superior to his notes on "*Childe Harold.*" Perhaps he understood the antiquities better than Nibbi, or any of the Cicerones; but the knowledge is somewhat misplaced where it is. Shelley went to the opposite extreme and never gave any notes. Hobhouse has an excellent heart: he fainted when he heard a false report of my death in Greece, and was wonderfully affected at that of Matthews — a much greater man than the *invalid*. The tribute I paid to his memory was a very inadequate one, and ill-expressed the grief I felt at his loss."

Such a testimony from Byron's own lips will have more weight than all the assertions of Mr. Dallas, or a host of hireling writers. Byron must have been a strange character indeed, according to their account, if, without being capable of entertaining a friendship, he could excite it in so many others, draw them after him into foreign countries, and, what is still more, not disgust or weary them out with his alleged freaks, fits of passion and morosity. But the truth is, that he was both capable of entertaining himself, and of exciting in others an esteem and friendship, which such trifles could never damp, much less obliterate. There are summer friends, and friends for all weathers; a Dallas, as well as a Hobhouse; a Trelawney, a Moore, a Davies, a Hay, a Shelley, &c., &c., &c.

Of Shelley, as a poet, we have already seen what was Byron's judgment—"that he had more poetry in him than any man living, if he was not so mystical," &c. "I know no two men," said he one day, "who have been so infamously treated as Shelley and Keats. If I had known that Millman had written the article on the '*Revolt of Islam*,' I would never have set down '*Fazio*' among the plays of the day—and scarcely know why I paid him that compliment. In consequence of the shameless personality of the '*Quarterly Review*,' every one abuses Shelley; his name is coupled with every thing that is

opprobrious; yet he is one of the most moral as well as amiable men I know. Judging from Millman, Christianity would appear a bad religion for a poet, and not a very good one for a man. His '*Siege of Jerusalem*' is one *cento* from Milton; and in style and language he is evidently an imitator of the very man whom he most abuses. None has been puffed like Millman; he owes his extravagant praise to Heber. These Quarterly Reviewers scratch one another's backs at a prodigious rate. Then as to Keats, though I am no admirer of his poetry (as Shelley was), I do not envy the man, whoever he was, that attacked and killed him. There are people so unwise as to read nothing but these *trimestrials*, and swear by the *ipse dixit* of these autocrats, Actæon-hunters of literature. They are fond of raising up and throwing down idols. '*The Edinburgh*' did so with Walter Scott's poetry, and, perhaps, there is no merit in my plays. It may be so; and Millman may be a great poet, if Heber is right and I am wrong. He has the dramatic faculty and I have not; so they pretended to say of Milton. I am too happy in being coupled in any way with Milton, and shall be glad if they find any point of comparison between us. But the praise or blame of reviewers does not last long now-a-days. It is like straw thrown up in the air."

Like Shelley and Keats, Lord Byron conceived

that he himself was hunted down by these blood-hound reviewers; and, after reading the review of his plays in "*The Quarterly*," he exclaimed, "I am the most unpopular writer of the age!" The illiberal abuse of a set of hireling reviewers he mistook for the general sense of the nation; and the mistake is easily to be accounted for. Those who have resided abroad know how difficult it is to gain a correct idea of public opinions at home. Letters and newspapers, which are but seldom received, on account of the vast expense of transmission, touch but lightly, or perhaps not at all, on these points of information that the reader is most anxious about, and only serve to tantalize the imagination, which is left to gather the state of public opinion from a number of vague circumstances that always leave the mind in doubt and suspense. While on the spot, absence of calumny creates a belief of its non-existence; abroad, on the contrary, silence is ominous; the fancy is at work, and torments a sensitive man, whose reputation is public property, in a manner of which it is difficult to form any conception: such was the state of Lord Byron's mind before he set out for Greece; he thought he had grown very unpopular (by some he was even stigmatized as infamous) in England. When Murray declined the publication of the "*Vision of Judgment*," in consequence of the Lord Chancellor's decision respecting "*Cain*," and Byron engaged with the

Hunts in the publication of "*The Liberal*," which was unsuccessful, he fancied, and doubtless was persuaded by some of his aristocratic friends that he had sunk beneath himself, and that the better sort of people thought him become vulgar, and had voted him out of fashion. The outcry against "*Don Juan*" for licentiousness and immorality confirmed this belief, as well as that he himself was suspected of the vices which he had attributed to his hero, and was morally outlawed by the public for them. This is said to have been one of the determining causes which led him to Greece, that he might retrieve his reputation; as he imagined that his name, coupled with the Greek cause, would sound well at home. If this were really the case, it would shew that Byron was not so reckless of the public opinion as he has been said to have been, and that he set a proper value on a good name and a fair fame. The trial convinced him of the wrong he had done to the good sense of the British nation in general, and served in a great measure to allay the irritation which it had occasioned in his mind. On his arrival in Cephalonia, when he found that he was well received by the authorities, and that the regiment stationed there, and the principal English residents, paid him the honours due to his station and great name, he was most highly gratified, and elevated to a pitch which shewed how anxious his fears had been that he had lost the esteem of the English

people. He rejoiced at the discovery, that instead of the whole of his native country, which his imagination had drawn up in battle array against him, the whole host of his foes was reduced to a petty tribe of hireling scribblers and reviewers. He even ridiculed his former fears, which he likened to Don Quixote's madness in attacking the puppets.

The reviewers (the Edinburgh ones especially) could never forgive the resistance that Byron made to their usurped supremacy and infallible decrees. Jeffrey made some awkward apologies, but renewed his animosity on the appearance of the "*Curse of Minerva*," in which he was joined by Blackwood's pack of blood-hounds. But Jeffrey was kept in some degree of awe by Lord Holland, and by the dread of Byron's satirical lash. He was still smarting under the *cutting* wit of tailor Thelwall, who retorted his abuse in the following technical terms:—"You may *curl* up at me as you like, Mr. Jeffrey, but I shall *comb* you down. I'll not be bearded by you, nor shall you stir me up with your pole, Mr. Shaver!" This retort courteous took off the edge of the criticism, and turned the laugh against Jeffrey, while Thelwall continued, and continues to the present day, *measuring* out lectures, and *fitting* his audiences in prime *radical* style. It were to be wished, for the benefit of the literary world, that Byron had bestowed a farewell lecture on the self-

sufficiency of reviewers. It would have amused the one, although it might not have improved the manners of the others.

The connexion between Lord Byron and Mr. Leigh Hunt originated in *gratitude* on the part of the former. When party matters, on account of the matrimonial squabbles, ran highest against Lord Byron, Leigh Hunt was almost the only literary man, the only editor of a newspaper, who had the courage to utter a word in his vindication. It was a manly stand in him against public obloquy, and his Lordship always felt grateful to him for the spirited part he took on the occasion. When he was in prison Lord Byron paid him one of his first visits. Lady Byron was in the carriage, and was kept waiting rather too long for female patience. When his Lordship went abroad, as Hunt was rather dissatisfied with his want of success in England, and testified a desire to try foreign parts, Byron and Shelley furnished a suite of apartments for him in the house of the former, which he occupied, and where a plan was conceived to be put in execution for his sole benefit. His principal object in going abroad was to establish a literary journal, to which his Lordship promised to contribute some occasional poems; particularly a translation of Ariosto. "I was strongly advised," said his Lordship, "by Tom Moore, long ago, not to have any connection with such an assemblage as Hunt, Shelley, and Co.; but I have pledged my-

self, and, besides, could not now, if I had ever so great a disinclination for the scheme, disappoint all Hunt's hopes. He has a large family, has undertaken a long journey, and undergone a long series of persecutions. Moore tells me that it was proposed to him to contribute to the new publication, but that he had declined it. I cannot get out of the scrape. Hunt would have made a fine writer, for he has a great deal of fancy and feeling, if he had not been spoiled by circumstances. He was brought up at the Blue-Coat-School foundation, and had never till lately been ten miles from St. Paul's. What poetry is to be expected from such a course of education? He has his school, however, and a host of disciples. A friend of mine calls '*Rimini*,' *Nimini Pimini;* and '*Foliage*,' *Folly-age.* Perhaps he had a tumble in climbing trees in the Hesperides! But "*Rimini*" possesses a great deal of merit. There never were so many fine things spoiled as in '*Rimini.*'"

Campbell,* in Lord Byron's opinion, was the most finished poet of his day; indeed too much so; he smells (like Gray) too strongly of the lamp; he is never satisfied with what he does; his finest things have been spoiled by too much

* Byron used to mention with pleasure, mixed with pride, that Campbell had noticed his grandfather, Admiral Byron, the navigator, in "*The Pleasures of Hope.*" He piqued himself on the honours of his ancestors, and wished to be thought not to have derogated from them.

limæ labor; the sharpness of the outline is worn off. Poems, like paintings, may be too highly finished. The great art is effect, no matter how produced—"*Ars est celare artem.*"

To the genius of Coleridge he always bore ample testimony, greatly as he disliked his connexions, and deficient as he thought him in gratitude. "*Christabel,*" said he, "was the origin of all Scott's metrical tales. Scott repeated the whole of it one day to me, and as he recites admirably, I imbibed a higher opinion of the poem than when I afterwards saw it in print. It was published eleven years after it was written, and, probably, in consequence of my opinion. The reviewers abused me for calling it a singularly original and beautiful poem, and said that I was no judge of the works of others. That may be, but I know what pleases myself. Some few of the lines found their way into the '*Siege of Corinth,*' and I adopted another passage of greater beauty as a motto to '*Fare Thee Well,*' and paraphrased the same idea in '*Childe Harold.*' I thought it good because I felt it sensibly—the best test of poetry. '*Coleridge's Memoirs*' amused me much. There is much native humour in that work, and he does not spare himself in it. Nothing, to me, is so entertaining as private biography; it is the man himself who speaks; '*Hamilton's Memoirs,*' for instance, were the origin of Voltaire's style. Madame de Staël used to say that '*De Gram-*

mont' was a book containing more interest than any she knew. '*Alfieri's Life*' is delightful. The world will see my confessions in good time, and will wonder at two things; that I should have had so much to confess, and that I should have confessed so much. Coleridge, too, seems sensible enough of his own errors. His sonnet to the moon is an admirable burlesque on the '*Lakists*,' and his own style. Some of his stories are told with a vast deal of humour, and display a fund of good humour that all his disappointments could not exhaust. Many parts, however, are quite unintelligible, and were, I apprehend, meant for Kant. Coleridge resembles Sosia in '*Amphytrion*;' he does not know whether he is himself or not. If he had never gone to Germany, nor spoiled his fine genius by the transcendental philosophy and German metaphysics,* nor taken to write any sermons, he would have made the greatest poet of the day, such as they were in 1795. Hayley had got a monopoly, such as it was. Coleridge might have been any thing; as it is, he is 'a thing that dreams are made of.' He rises and falls like the tides—is great and little by turns. What a contrast between '*The Ancient Mariner*' and '*Songs of the Pixies*,' (Devonshire

* Byron again sees those faults in others, which he overlooked in himself. The follower of "*Schiller*" and "*Goëthe*," pick a quarrel with German metaphysics; and with "*Cain*," "*Manfred*," and "*Werner*," rising up in judgment against him!

fairies!), and '*Lines to a Young Lady*,' and '*Lines to a Young Ass!*'

> 'How well the subject suits his noble mind!
> A fellow-feeling makes us wond'rous kind.'
>
> *English Bards, &c.*

"Wordsworth has a genius, but, like a boy building houses with dirt, he amuses himself with childish trifles, and the vulgarities of low life. A disciple of Southey's school, he has laboured hard to prove that verse and prose are much the same, and certainly his precept and his practice are strictly conformable. Many things of his are so affectedly babyish as to excite only contempt and ridicule; some few, indeed, may be read with pleasure. He had once a feeling of nature, which he almost carried to a deification of it; it was on that account that Shelley so highly praised his poetry. It is satisfactory to reflect that when a man becomes a hireling and loses his mental independence, he loses also the faculty of writing well. The lyrical ballads, jacobinical, and puling with affectation of simplicity as they were, had undoubtedly some merit; and Wordsworth, though occasionally a writer for the nursery-masters and misses,—

> "Who took their little porringer,
> And ate their porridge there,"—

sometimes expressed ideas worth imitating; but, like brother Southey, he had his price, and since he has turned tax-gatherer (stamp distributor),

is fit only to rhyme about country lasses and waggoners:

> "And thus to Betty's question he
> Made answer, like a traveller bold;
> The cock did crow to-whoo!—to-whoo!
> And the sun did shine so cold, &c., &c."

"There was a time when he might have written better, but then he would not have been so well paid for it. The *Lakists* are in a queer predicament; with their old sins staring them in the face, their new principles would only betray their apostacy; they amuse the world with trifles, because serious things would tend to their exposure. 'Eat your pudding, slave, and hold your tongue,' is the maxim they have adopted. In such a state of degradation, they have at length arrived to such perfection in the *Bathos*, that, were they to venture on the Westmoreland lakes with a cargo of their old-new fangled English hexameters, they would be infallibly sunk to the bottom, and each one might preface his next new work with a '*De profundis clamavi.*'"

CHAPTER XIV.

Extracts from other Letters and authentic Documents, containing Lord Byron's Opinions of the different foreign Countries through which he travelled.—The Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants;—Eminent Persons, &c. &c.—Foreigners prejudiced against him by Glenarvon.—Switzerland.—Original poetical Effusion inscribed in the Album, at Mont Auvert.—Milan.—Ferrara.—Venice.—Rome.—Canova, Sgricci.--Rome an unhealthy Spot.—Ravenna.—Florence.—Alfieri.—Fiesole, celebrated by Boccacio, Milton, and Galileo.—Thoughts on the Regeneration of Italy.

In proportion as Lord Byron's character was blazed over Europe as the first poet of the age, so were the reports to the discredit of his morals circulated and read with avidity. When it was known that he had again left his country, and was arrived in Switzerland, every eye was strained to get a peep at so strange a compound of talents and vice, as they deemed the hero of that absurd, malignant, and mendacious novel, "*Glenarvon*," to be, yet all fled away at his approach, as dreading contagion. Even the strong mind of Madame de Staël was at first shaken, until, finding from frequent communications, that the *Bard* was not the *Monster* he had been represented to be, she not only did him justice herself, but endeavoured to

efface the injurious impressions from the minds of others. Such a state of things, however, could not be pleasant, or even tolerable, to a mind constituted as Byron's was. "Switzerland," said he, "is a country that I have been satisfied with seeing *once*." It was not the country, but the manners of the people that he disliked. There cannot be a more mistaken idea than that Switzerland is a land of liberty. At Geneva and Berne there are 400 *surveillans*, or petty tyrants, who, to make a parade of their power, are taking offence at every trifle, and making every one an object of persecution. The prudery of the women is, besides, incredible and truly ridiculous. They address the same round of formalities, or what they mistake for compliments, to every one they meet, and would think their virtue in danger, or at least decorum violated, if they deviated from this dull routine in which they are trained from the nursery. There is nothing of that natural manner, that easy vivacity, and social intercourse, that form the charm of society; all is frigidity, and even English prudery vanishes to air before it. It may readily be supposed that such a state of society was not suited to Byron's taste. "I knew very few of the Genevese." said he. "Polidori once asked a couple of the Professors to dine with me. I had gone out to sail early in the morning, and the wind prevented my returning in time for *his* engagement. Polidori did the honours in my stead; but I was given to understand that *I* had mortally, though unintentionally,

offended these guests. Among our countrymen I made no new acquaintances. Shelley, Monk Lewis, and Hobhouse, were almost the only English people I saw. No wonder; I shewed a distaste for society at that time, and went little among the Genevese; besides I could not speak French. Who would wish to make a show-bear of himself, and dance to whatever tune any fool likes to play? Madame de Staël said, I think, speaking of Goëthe, that people who did not wish to be judged by what they said, did not deserve that the world should trouble itself about what they said. She herself was tormented with a most insatiable desire for talking and shining. If she had talked less, she might have written more and better. For me, it is indifferent what the world says or thinks of me. Let them know me from my works. I do not shine in conversation."

Had Byron felt an inclination for society, never was there a fairer opportunity to have indulged it. There were at that time 500 or 600 persons, many of them the most distinguished in Europe for titles, wealth, and talents, who were all to be met with in the drawing-room at Copet; Mesdames de Staël, Necker, Saussure, de Broglie, &c. &c. &c.; Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. Brougham, Lord Byron, Shelley, Hobhouse, Monk Lewis, Bonstetten, Dumont, Prevot, Pictet, de Breme, Schlezel, &c.&c.&c. formed an assemblage of characters, such as, perhaps, never was, and never will be again gathered together, around the shores of the Lake of Ge-

neva, all playing, like so many planets, around Madame de Staël, their sun, of whom Byron draws the following portrait:

"Madame de Staël had great talent in conversation, and an uncommon flow of speech. It was once said of a large party that were all trying to shine—'There is not one who can go home and think.' Such was not her case. She was often troublesome; some thought her rude in her questions; but she never offended me, because I knew that her inquisitiveness did not proceed from idle curiosity, but from a wish to sift characters. Women never see consequences—never look at things straight forward, or as they ought. Like figurantes at the opera, they make a hundred *pirouettes* and return to where they set out. With Madame de Staël this was sometimes the case. She was very indefinite and vague in her manner of expression. In endeavouring to be novel, she was often obscure, and sometimes unintelligible. What did she mean by saying that Napoleon was a system, and not a man? Napoleon mortally wounded her vanity by his expression of '*Gardez vos enfans*;' but I cannot believe he persecuted her, as she was always saying, or that he deemed her of sufficient importance to be dangerous. Like me, he had too great a contempt for women; he treated them as puppets, and thought he could make them dance at any time by pulling the wires. He was his own antithesis: but a glorious tyrant withal. Look at his public works; compare his

face, on his coins, with those of other sovereigns of Europe. And yet I blame the manner of his death; he shewed that he possessed much of the Italian character in consenting to live. There he lost himself in his dramatic character, in my estimation. He should have gone off the stage like a hero, as was expected of him; he should have died on the field of battle.* Perhaps that was what Madame de Staël meant, or something like it. She was always aiming to be brilliant—to produce an effect, no matter how. She wished to make all her ideas, like figures in the modern French school of painting, prominent and showy, standing out of the canvass, and glittering with light. She was vain, but who has an excuse for vanity, if she had not?"

The following poetical effusion was written by Lord Byron, in the "*Travellers' Album*," at the valley of Chamouni, in Switzerland. Some person, possessed of more curiosity than correctness of principle, had torn out the leaf of the book on which it was inscribed; but the lines having been copied by some Englishman, were re-written

* It was from the deck of the Northumberland, on his passage to St. Helena, that Napoleon last saw his beloved France. As the land he had swayed so long glided from his steadfastly fixed eye, gazing with affection on its shores, and wrapped in the deepest thought, he bade it adieu; then turning to the generals who shared his captivity, he spoke of his unjustifiable exile, adding, that many, under similar circumstances, would commit *suicide*, but, exclaimed he—"*Je ferai plus!——Je vivrai!*".

in the book, at the request of the inn-keeper, and are now exhibited as a precious memento to every traveller, who visits the Glaciers, or *Mer de Glace:*

"All hail! Mont Blanc—Mont-au-Vert—hail!
With thee I can associate still;
And, should all other pleasures fail,
I'll stretch me by the murmuring rill;
Or into solitude I'll fly,
And commune with the Deity.

"Far from the pride and scorn of man,
The ruthless object of their care,
The works of Nature I can scan,
And sometimes bold, yet fearful, dare
Express the feelings kindly giv'n
By the benevolence of Heav'n.

"Alone I came, alone I go,
Alike unnotic'd and unknown;
Press'd by a weight of lasting woe,
From East to West by tempest blown!
No rest, no peace, until I fly
From time unto eternity.

"Yet why—yet, why should I complain?
Are not some other joys my own?
Joys, which the multitude disdain,
To duller, happier, souls unknown?
Yes—I will bravely dare my lot,
Until I die and be forgot.

"No need to add my humble name,
Ne'er mention'd yet by babbling fame;
Few Wits demand to whom belong
These transports of a child of song;
One, who would wish with poet's fire
And daring hand, to sweep the lyre."

"G. B."

"MILAN has very handsome streets, a corso, and four or five thousand columns of granite; the people are a paradox; as concise as Tacitus in conversation; and, in writing, as they aim at using the finest Tuscan periods, as prolix as Cicero. Catalani was there giving a round of concerts; and it was remarked of her that she was not improved since she sang at Milan, eighteen years before. The orchestra was filled with the best performers in Italy; and Rossini, the composer, was also there. The Opera-House *(La Scala)* is the general rendezvous of the city; there is no society elsewhere, nor a private house open to receive company. All visits are paid and received in the boxes of the theatre. There the Milanese ladies appear in all that amiable and attractive mildness of manners for which they are famed. Each has her *cavaliere servente* by her side, who jokes, disputes, and laughs with her, or serves her with ices and sherbets. Milan is the abode of soft, gentle voluptuousness. It is a *Circean* palace; from which the besotted guests withdraw themselves with regret.

"FERRARA, once a great and opulent city, whilst independent, is become a wilderness since it came into the power of the Pope, and the Legate might maintain a regiment of cavalry upon the grass that grows in the streets. The rich people sell their possessions, and retire to Milan: it does not support a theatre; and yet it was in this city that Ariosto recited the story of Joconde, at the court of the sovereign! How are the mighty fallen!

"VENICE, once the *Queen* of the *Ocean*, and more advantageously situated than, perhaps, any other city on the face of the earth, contains at present scarcely 50,000 jovial beggars. To give some idea of its present degradation, the palace Vadramin, on the Great Canal, which cost 25,000 louis building, and in 1794 was valued at 10,000, was lately offered to sale for 1,000. Yet there is a society that is but too intoxicating to the senses. Madame Benzoni is the Sultana of Venice; no drawing-room in Paris or London can boast a circle to rival her's. And then the scenery! Cast the eye at night over the island of Lido, which separates Laguna from the tranquil sea in the distance, which breaks on the shore with a murmuring noise, as a brilliant line marks the summit of each wave, and the moon sheds a placid light over the brilliant surface. What a view! It is but faintly described in the midnight scene in "*Marino Faliero.*" It is to this grandeur of prospect and atmospheric clearness that the Venetian school owns its brilliancy of colouring. The eyes have their habits, and borrow from Nature those objects to which they are mostly accustomed. Here the eye is perpetually on the lucid sea; every thing is brilliant, the azure of the sea and of the sky has given the tone which we deem the art of the painter, and which is merely the effect of Nature.

"The poor people of Venice live only for enjoyment, and appear insensible of the degradation of the *Ocean's* Queen from her pristine glory. It strikes the stranger (the reflecting one) with the

most melancholy sensations. The natives reprobate Bonaparte for sacrificing Venice to Austria, but it occasions them few sombre reflections. The manners of the higher classes would furnish admirable comedies, if they possessed good writers. Goldoni's comedies are Flemish pictures of low life, but full of truth, of a people eager in pursuit of happiness and pleasure, who think nothing vicious but what is hurtful. The ladies of higher rank are subject to little restraint. Large parties often assemble at Florian's Coffee-House on the place of St. Mark, in the same manner as the other sex in other places. Women here, as every where else, were my bane and antidote. There was a portrait taken at Venice of a female, which Murray got engraved, and styled her my *Fornarina.* It was taken by Harlowe, an English artist, who died soon after his return from Rome. One day, this fair frail one, who was a casual acquaintance of mine, came in, and happened to be seen by the artist, who was struck by her appearance, and desired she might sit to him. The request was complied with, and I sent the drawing home as a specimen, and no bad one, of the Venetians, for she was handsome, though the most troublesome shrew and termagant I ever met with. To give some idea of her, she used to call me the *Gran Cane della Madonna.* When once she had got a footing within my house, she took a dislike to the outside of it, and I had great diffi-

culty in uncolonizing her. She forced her way back one day, when I was at dinner, and, snatching a knife from the table, offered to stab herself if I did not consent to her stay. I laughed at the threat, knowing it to be only a feint, and she ran to the balcony and threw herself into the canal. As it was only knee-deep, and there was plenty of gondolas, she was soon picked up, but the affair made a great noise at the time. Some said that I had thrown her into the water; others that she had drowned herself for love (a good jest!); but this is the true story.

"I got into another scrape by paying my devoirs to a spinster. At Venice you may flirt with as many dowagers as you please, but beware of the *Raggazzas*. I had been one night under her window serenading, and the next morning I was surprized by the visit of a priest and a police-officer, who came, as I thought, either to shoot or to marry me;—I did not much care which. The *cicisbeo* system is a mystery to me, as I could never discover the origin of it. Some Italians pretend to trace it to the latter end of the middle ages, when there was a number of petty tyrants in Italy, who thought to give dignity to their courts by imitating the Spanish etiquette, and giving *esquires* to their wives. This system is nowhere more prevalent than at Venice. The son of the Doge is no less gay than the gondolier, and his intrigues are no less public. Whoever speaks of another has no hesitation in mentioning the lady to whom

he is in *servitù*, and, in giving the description of a party of pleasure, never fails, even in the presence of the husband, to name the *pepina* who was then served by such an one. Ignorance, idleness, and voluptuousness, are so prevalent among the Italians, that a long time must elapse ere they can be regenerated. Venice, with all its temptations, is a melancholy place to reside in;—to see a city die daily, as she does, is a sombre prospect. I sought to distract my mind from a sense of her desolation, and my own solitude, by plunging into a vortex, that affords any thing but pleasure. When one gets into a mill-stream, it is hard to keep oneself from being engulphed. I detest every recollection of the place, the people, and their mode of life. I there mixed again in society, went through the usual routine of conversaziones, balls, concerts—frequented the Operas—was a constant visitor of the Ridotta during the carnival—and, in a word, entered into all the dissipation of that licentious place. Every thing in a Venetian life—its gondolas—its effeminating indolence—its siroccos, tend to enervate both mind and body. My rides on horseback might have proved a resource and stimulus; but the deep sands of the Lido broke my horses down, and I soon got tired of a two mile circuit on that monotonous sea-shore; to be sure I passed the Villegiatura on the Brenta. I wrote little at Venice, and was forced into the pursuit of pleasure, a pursuit with which I was soon jaded.

In a word, I was disgusted and tired with the life I led there, and was glad to turn my back upon it.

"ROME—Imperial Rome!—once mistress of the world!—"how is the mighty fallen!" On her venerable ruins is now erected the gloomy altar of priestcraft. The Coliseum, the Pantheon, and so many other monuments of ancient glory, now converted into mean churches, with the paltry ornaments of modern taste; what had they been, if suffered to retain their pristine magnificence, surrounded by palaces instead of deserted places, Mount Aventine, the Quirinal, and Palatine hills! Happy Palmyra! happy in thy solitude! though the haunt of wolves, foxes, and hyænas, no modern Gothicism has defaced thy venerable and glorious remains.

"The present degraded race of Romans does not feel ashamed to arrogate to itself, *sans cérémonie*, the glory of its hardy and warlike ancestors. They talk affectedly of *questa gran Roma*, and are fond of saying that such or such a thing is *degno di una Roma*, without feeling how unworthy they are of their descent. If Rome should remain the capital, Italy will never be regenerated; the lowest intrigues and vilest cabals will ever occasion a gangrene. The little energy to be still found at Rome is confined to the female sex, some of whom may remind one of the Sempronia of Sallust. There are no Brutuses, Curtiuses, or Horatii, to be found among the men. They are, however, or pretend to be, enthusiastic admirers

of Dante, and assert that there is a much greater variety of character, to be found in his works than in those of Shakspeare. Every thing that is allowed to possess any sort of merit is said to be an imitation of Dante, so prejudiced are the Italians in favour of their countryman! This partiality may be patriotic, but it is an overheated pride, entirely devoid of truth and reason. It is an energetic and republican inflation occasioned by recollections of ancient Roman glory. It is modern vanity in all its absurdity. This spirit of party is carried even into the arts; it is a last vestige of patriotism, but a very ridiculous one. Men, of really good understanding, will maintain that an indifferent painter or sculptor, must be excellent, because he has studied at Rome. This prejudice bars excellence. In architecture, for instance, nothing can betray worst taste than the modern erections, unless it be the sculptures with which they are decorated. Canova is the only worthy continuator of the art after Bernini. He is procuring busts of all the eminent artists to be placed in the Pantheon, a place so dear to every lover of the arts, by the tomb of Raphael. Canova is too great to escape envy; he has a party raised against him, who would fain erect Thorwalsen, a Dane, into a rivalry with him; but it is "a satyr to Hyperion." With Canova the art of sculpture will expire, at least for a time. The Romans are too indolent and too conceited to

furnish a succession of good artists. You may make a Roman do any thing but work. They feed upon the steams of past glory.

"At present all conversation is engrossed by a Signor Sgricci, an *improvisatore*, who delivers a tragedy on subjects off hand, at least so his auditors believe; but it is a medley from all the old Greek tragedians. He studiously avoids all modern subjects, in which the Greek chorus cannot be introduced. It must be allowed, however, that he has extraordinary merit, or at least, memory.

"Every thing at Rome prognosticates decline; all is but recollection of the past; a dull and dreary night. The only law in force is religion. England and America are indebted for their civilization, to the liberty of the press. Here it puts forth nothing but falsehoods and pretended miracles. To *think* is *ennuyeux* everywhere,—here it is dangerous. They may make love as much as they please; but beware of a joke founded on incredulity. What would become of Rome but for superstition? This constraint prevents any thing like society or civilization. Faith, or rather credulity, is every thing, and the natives of the Sandwich Islands, or Otaheite, are in a much fairer way for it than the inhabitants of St. Peter's patrimony. The ecclesiastics, in general, are pious men *in their way*, but they have only the experience of solitude; all that they know of men is derived from books, and in times long since past; they have no idea of present times. But

such of them as have travelled, agree that there must be some change of system, as has been the change in the minds of men. The superstitions of the *dark* ages, will not suit the present *enlightened* epoch. Italy seems awaiting the spring season of regeneration.

"As a place of residence, Rome is a delightful situation, but very insalubrious, and becoming daily more and more so The *malaria*, or *aria cattiva*, increases every year, and places, which were reckoned the most wholesome some years ago, have now lost their repute, such as the Villa Borghese, Mount Mario, and the Villa Panfili. To correct this *aria cattiva*, a project has been broached of draining, or at least, reducing the Pontine marshes to the state in which they were, under the old Romans, and planting the *Campagna di Roma;* this might in some measure lessen the evil; but an entire change of system, and another form of government can only restore degraded Italy to any thing like its ancient celebrity.

"RAVENNA is truly an enchanting spot. Except some parts of Greece, I never was so attached to any place in my life as to Ravenna, and, but for the failure of the Constitutionalists, and a plot laid with the sanction of the Pope's legate for seizing the Guiccioli, and immuring her in a convent, should perhaps never have left it. The peasantry are the best people on earth, and the beauty of the women is extraordinary. Those of Tivoli and Frescati, whose charms are so much

vaunted, are mere Sabines, coarse creatures, compared with the Romagnese. You may talk of your English women, and perhaps, out of one hundred Italians and English women, you will find thirty of the latter handsome; but then there will be one Italian on the other side of the scale, who will more than balance the deficit in numbers, —one who, like the Florence Venus, has no rival, and can have none in the north. I have learned more from the peasants in the countries I have travelled in than from any other source, especially from the women; they are more intelligent as well as more communicative than the men. I also found at Ravenna, much education and liberality of sentiment among the higher classes. The climate is delightful. I was not broken in upon by the impertinence of society, as it lies out of the way of travellers. I was never tired of my rides in the fine forests; it breathes of the Decameron, and is poetical ground. Francesca lived, and Dante was exiled, and died at Ravenna. There is something inspiring in such an air. The people were as much attached to me, as they detested the government. I was popular with all the leaders of the constitutional party. They knew that I sprang from a land of liberty, and wished well to their cause; that I was ready to have espoused it too, and to have assisted them to break their fetters. The failure was a great disappointment, and the proscription that followed was excessive. All my friends, particularly the Gambas, were

included in it; and they knew that this would eventually drive me out of the country. I did not follow them immediately, in order to shew them that I was not to be bullied or terrified, although I had myself fallen under the suspicion of the government. If they could have got sufficient proof, they would have caused me to be arrested, but no one betrayed me; indeed, there was nothing to betray, as I did not take part in their intrigues, nor join in their political coteries. However I received several anonymous letters advising me to discontinue my forest rides; but I determined to shew myself above any apprehensions of treachery, and was more on horseback than ever; but I never stirred out without being well armed. They knew that I was a good marksman, and this, perhaps, saved me. The massacre of the commandant shewed me that my precautions were not ill-timed.

"The country around Ravenna, indeed the whole of Tuscany is charming, particularly in the spring, when vegetation rises as if by magic out of the ground at once. In the winter there are no verdant meadows as in England; the only green is that of the dark firs and cypresses, and the hazy-looking olive. There is very little other wood, except a few poplars, oaks, and chesnuts; but the vines, of which you see nothing in the winter, sprout up in the spring from their stock, like fairy-work, and deck the lanes with the most beautiful verdure. It is delightful then to ride through

them, particularly in the twilight, as I have described in the third canto of Don Juan.

> " Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude
> Of the pine forest, and the silent shore,
> Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
> Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er;
> To where the last Cesarean fortress stood,
> Evergreen forest! which Boccacio's lore,
> And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me—
> How have I lov'd the twilight hour and thee!"

"FLORENCE has a reputation, I think far beyond its deserts; situated in a narrow slip of valley between two naked mountains, it offers few charms as a place of residence. As to the inhabitants they are remarkable for nothing so much as long speeches, fine liveries, and the making a figure with the most rigid economy. All the Florentines have so meagre an outline, that one would think it was Lent with them all the year round; and, in fact, that is pretty nearly the truth. An Englishman loves to fare well; a Florentine's whole aim is to make the world believe that he fares well. A breakfast of four, and a dinner of twelve sous at a coffee-house will suffice the best among them. The same rigid economy extends even to their highest class. Persons, frequenting the court, dine at home upon a couple of dishes, yet no people give finer liveries. This excessive parsimony may be dated from a long time back. In the middle ages Florence was a great place of commerce. From a republic it became a dukedom—its trade declined, but its economy, the

very essence of trade, still remained. At present it is the resort of people of broken fortunes, with whom economy is a virtue of necessity.

"Alfieri died at Florence, in 1803, leaving behind him twenty-two tragedies. His life is a delightful piece of biography. He hated kings because he was not born a king; but he held the nobility in the highest veneration, because he was born noble. His own gloomy temper made him entertain an aversion for every thing that was happy: upon a throne he would have been a Nero. He was so great a slave to his propensities that he set no bounds to his passion for horses, for literary fame, and his hatred of kings, which he disguised under the veil of a love of liberty. As a writer he formed himself upon the model of the Greek tragedians. His stories are simple, well-chosen, and skilfully managed; his characters express natural feelings with much energy of expression and great beauty. He avoids excess of declamation, and unnecessary narration, and goes straight forward to his point. Shakepeare may be read in all humours and at all seasons; Alfieri should be read only at night, when one feels a strong indignation against tyrants.

"Two miles from Florence, at the foot of the Fiesolan hills, is the "*Valle delle Donne*," the "*Valley of Ladies*," a spot rendered classical ground by the sixth and seventh books of "*Boccace's Decameron*." Two little streams which water the valley, the Africo, and the Mensola,

are the metamorphosed hero and heroine of a poem of Boccace's, called the "*Nymphale of Fiesole.*" Nigh the Mensola, about half a mile from the Valle delle Donne, is the Villa Gherardi, in which Boccace laid the scenes of his first four days; and upon the Mugnone, about a mile on the other side of the valley, is the Villa Palmieri, to which his company withdrew for the rest of their excursion. Not far from this villa there is shewn a house which is said to have belonged to Dante. Fiesole has been immortalized by Milton and Galileo, and there is not, perhaps, a name celebrated in the annals of Florence which may not be brought into some connexion with this highly favoured spot. In Boccace's time, the Africo formed a little crystal lake, in which (being much sequestered), the ladies of his company one day bathe themselves. The gentlemen, hearing of it, follow the example, and the next day the whole party dine there, take their siesta under the shade, and relate their novels. Although the place has undergone many alterations, yet tradition has preserved all the situations marked out by Boccace. The lake is now filled up, and corn grows where the fishes sported. The Africo is also partly closed up by private grounds, but the rest flows as freely as it did formerly, and near the convent of the Doccia it springs out in a limpid stream, and, sliding between narrow banks, waters the valley beneath. Such is the Valley of the Ladies, embowered with olives and chesnut trees, and,

if the imagination add to the picture a sky serene and intensely blue, and *ladies bathing*, as in the days of Boccace, it is a spot fit for the spirit of Boccace, if it ever revisits the earth, to repose in. In imagination, I have often seen him there, such as he looked when he meditated the story of the Falcon. The knight in romance was also there, in dark armour, with his shield and sword by his side, his helmet taken off to taste the fresh breeze, and lying, like Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in the picture, thinking on future achievements. But these are mere recollections; the iron age of chivalry has disappeared before the golden one of commerce.

"Italy seems now at a dead stand; a free and wise government is wanting to rouse her from her torpid state. A Canova, or an Alfieri, may burst forth by chance through the influence of this fine climate on the soul of man; but they are phenomena. Sculpture, generally speaking, is as much lost as painting; engraving is practised, but merely as a trade. Music still boasts some sparks of celestial fire, and that and *love making* are the only employments in this fine country. Distrust extinguishes friendship, and society languishes; but, to atone for all, love is here carried on in perfection. Amidst so many, and such rapid changes of government, *distrust*, that characteristic of the Italian character, is increased, and, indeed, it is impossible for them to be too jealous. This accounts for their enthusiastic admiration of music and love-making, as an Italian is restricted

from seeking his amusements in conversation; an indiscreet word, spoken to day, may prove his ruin years hence. The Italians are too full of recollections of the past ever to be capable of performing great things. There is nothing among them of originality; every thing is imitation. The poet imitates Dante; the prose-writer Boccace; and the historian Machiavel. They must learn to think for themselves, and, such is the happy genius of this people, that, as soon as they do so, they will again delight the world by *chef-d'œuvres* of arts, and regain their ancient supremacy in these, at least, if not in arms. The least spark will kindle up a celestial flame that will shine for ages."

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